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ON THE IMAGE OF WOMAN IN SURREALIST ART

by

Robert James Belton

Graduate Department of the History of Art

A Thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the
University of Toronto

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Surrealism as a special case of modernism, and the sexually asymmetrical determinants of both. The Surrealist Woman pretends to stand outside history.

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Introduction: A Disappointing and Contentious Reality

Surrealism is often approached primarily as a preoccupation with automatic techniques and the exploration of the unconscious. The results of such investigations tend to neutralize the significance of Surrealist iconography by subordinating it to formal experiment or by assuming it is an expression of unalterable psychic truths. Despite the unquestionable value of such approaches, they leave gaps in our understanding. This study treats one such gap: the image of Woman, a theme even more central to Surrealism than it was to the culture of the late nineteenth century.

The late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, stamped indelibly by a faith in reason, were marked by a lamentable succession of disasters. The foremost example was the Great War, which was so horrific that an entire generation of artists and poets willingly isolated themselves from reason itself and from the materialism that it accompanied. Among this generation were those who called themselves Dadaists. Nihilism and contradiction were their primary weapons in an irrationalist revolt, while their artistic productions were equally oppositional. In place of reasoned composition, Dada exploited chance; in place of deliberate study, it exploited spontaneity. It was the first systematic artistic use of the absurd in modern times.

Dada and Surrealism are often thrust together as if they were essentially the same phenomenon. Part of this is because Surrealism was also more than a mere artistic movement. It too was a lifestyle, a morality, a philosophy, and a rebellion. However, Surrealism differed from Dada in several important respects. A young French poet and former medical student, André Breton, was one of many vying in the early 1920s for the exclusive right to use the fashionable term surréaliste, which had been coined slightly earlier by the poet Guillaume Apollinaire. Whereas the latter used the word rather vaguely to link art to scientific or industrial progress, Breton had a much clearer picture in mind. Defending it against all pretenders, he repeatedly defined Surrealism as a means to gain access to a superior reality which accepted the insights of the unconscious mind.[1] With this, Breton distinguished his position from that of the Parisian Dadaists, precisely because the contents of the mind were to be harnessed and systematically fused with what bourgeois convention regarded as actual existence. Such fusions were to transform external reality, to shape it according to the internal reality which bourgeois society repressed. On the narrow plane of artistic effort, Surrealism eventually replaced Dada's extemporaneous drawings and randomizing processes--best exemplified by Hans Arp's Zurich works[2]--with what Breton called automatism and objective chance. Both of these concepts were irrational, but neither was particularly Dadaistic: automatism was predicated on psychology and mediumistic spiritualism, while objective chance was not chance at all but its antonym--an unconscious necessity, a psychological determinism akin to certain Freudian concepts. Both procedures were oriented towards the communication of repressed information, which often entailed some desire that bourgeois morality deemed unrealizable. To satisfy such desires was thus equivalent to social upheaval; in the place of Dada's political anarchism, then, Surrealism offered a directed revolution.

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[1] André Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism" (1924), in his Manifestoes of Surrealism, trans., R. Seaver and H. R. Lane (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1972), p. 26. Apollinaire invented the word in 1917. See his "[Parade]," in Oeuvres complètes, ed., M. Décaudin (Paris: André Ballard and Jacques Lecat, 1966), vol. IV, pp. 444-5; and his "Les mamelles de Tirésias," in the same edition, vol. III, p. 609. The most celebrated pretender was Yvan Goll, whose review Surréalisme ran only one issue (October 1924). Less well known was Paul Dermée, who used the word before Breton in connection with automatism, Sigmund Freud, and Pierre Janet: "Découverte du lyrisme," L'Esprit nouveau, no. 1 (1920), p. 37.

Revolution was in the air between 1918 and 1939, and the Surrealists dabbled with political engagement for many of those years. The French Communist Party, however, was never particularly comfortable with the Surrealists' early despair and tendencies towards mysticism,[3] so the poets, painters and others who moved in and out of Breton's circle directed much of their effort elsewhere. To the alienation of the working class perceived by Marx, the Surrealists added their own disappointment with a contentious reality. They saw that all men, regardless of social standing, were alienated by the day-to-day existence which prevented them from realizing their desires. They conceived of a Surrealist revolution which would go beyond mere political insurgency to transform the world itself and the ways in which lives were led. In the place of armed insurrection, they offered a model of gratification based in part on the wish-fulfillment discerned by Sigmund Freud in dreams--a psychic mechanism of satisfaction that presumably knew no class barriers. They went beyond Freud as well; seeking the total liberation of the human spirit, they drew inspiration from a wide variety of precursors in whom they recognized a similar emancipatory spirit.

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[2] See William Rubin, Dada and Surrealist Art (New York: Abrams, 1968), figs. 58-9. The motivations behind these works are more fully explored in Harriet Ann Watts, Chance: A Perspective on Dada (Ann Arbor: U.M.I. Research Press, 1980).

The Surrealists went foraging in the back-alleys of forgotten culture, as it were, in an attempt to find alternatives to the conservative optimism of the Parisian avant-garde in the 1920s. They opposed art and poetry concerned with formal investigation, even when infused with a revolutionary utopianism, as in the case of the contemporary movement known as Purism.[4] Instead, pictures and words were conceived of as vehicles of a new archaeology of sorts, aimed at sounding the depths of both civilization and the human mind. From the spontaneous expressiveness of primitive artifacts to the calculated eccentricities of Gothic and Symbolist literature, from the suggestive strangeness of occult practices to the arid pages of philosophical and scientific treatises on the nature of the mind--the Surrealists drew from every alternative they could find to the hated social fabric which had led not only to historical catastrophe, but also to a universal malaise, a frustration which knew no temporal limitations. But there was an irony. In trying to escape from their time, the Surrealists gave expression to human aspirations which were nonetheless determined by it.

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[3] See, for example, the collective documents of April 1925 cited in Maurice Nadeau, Histoire du surréalisme, rev. ed. (Paris: Seuil, 1964), pp. 219-20.

"Determined" may seem like a strong word, but most of the Surrealists agreed that determination played some role in their work. Salvador Dalí, for example, linked his megalomania to his mother's drinking cup marked with the image of Napoleon;[5] Max Ernst's self-identification with birds was supposed to have been sparked by the death of a pet cockatoo simultaneous with the birth of a sister; René Magritte's mother died by suicide when he was fourteen years old, and no analysis of his work has failed to exploit this fact. In spite of their acknowledgement that childhood traumas influenced the formation of the psyche, if not of specific desires, the Surrealists were resolutely silent with respect to how widely-held attitudes in "rational," adult society had saturated their ideology. In this silence, Surrealism can be seen as an expression of its era, just like the social order it tried to subvert.

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[4] See the exhibition catalogue Leger and Purist Paris (London: Tate Gallery, 18 November 1970-24 January 1971). Tristan Tzara's "Essai sur la situation de la poésie," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 4 (December 1931), p. 20, describes the Purist magazine L'Esprit nouveau as having a "contemptibly hygienic" concept of the modern spirit.

[5] See Salvador Dalí, The Unspeakable Confessions of Salvador Dalí, as Told to André Parinaud, trans., H. J. Salemson (New York: Morrow, 1976), pp. 31-2. The other examples mentioned in the text are discussed below.

It has long been thought that hostility towards women was partly due to the Great War. Men presumably resented women, who were not exposed to death or dismemberment in the battlefield. Worse yet, women managed to secure employment in customarily male industries, further alienating those at the front. The men who had to stay behind watched as women urged their brothers into battle, gradually adopting male habits like the wearing of pants, the riding of motorcycles, and sexual openness. When the war was over, the traditionally patriarchal order was reasserted; threatened by tendencies towards emancipation, the male regime consciously initiated a wave of antifeminism.[6] One of the most conspicuous manifestations was the publication of the so-called "fourteen points" of the French Senator Alexandre Bérard, which asserted that women did not want electoral representation, that women's sentimental hands were made not for ballots but for kisses, and other such implausible justifications. The widespread acceptance of Bérard's points succeeded in preventing French women from voting for twenty-two years![7] The 1920s did see a quiet flurry of feminist activities and the creation of a mannish, modish female type akin to the American flapper, but bourgeois standards usually triumphed. A celebrated example was the enormously successful novel La Garçonne (the bachelorette), written by Victor Margueritte in 1922. It told the story of a free- thinking young woman whose scandalous behaviour was redeemed at last by her marriage to an engineer.[8]

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[6] Sandra M. Gilbert, "Soldier's Heart: Literary Men, Literary Women, and the Great War," Signs, VIII, no. 3 (Spring 1983), pp. 422-50.

Now, the Surrealists theoretically abhorred bourgeois marriage and childbearing as restrictive social customs, particularly in their collective declaration "Hands Off Love."[9] However, this did not stop them from marrying or from having children. On virtually all other counts, Surrealism tacitly agreed with post-war antifeminism. To the masculine silhouettes of flapper fashion, they preferred the "feminine" lines created by the corset.[10] To a decisive, politically aware woman situated firmly in an historical moment, they opposed an ephemeral, fairy-like creature who transcended time in such an eternal childhood bliss that she was eventually called the *femme-enfant*, the woman-child. To the female seeking changes in legislation, they contrasted the sorceress seeking changes in mental states. Even when they dealt with a specific female reformer--a very rare event indeed--their appraisal clearly rendered her subservient. The best example is Breton's late comment on Flora Tristan, whom he identifies first as the maternal grandmother of the painter Paul Gauguin. Only afterwards does he mention that she was a nineteenth-century socialist and an early women's rights activist. Otherwise, his preface to a selection of her unpublished letters tells us nothing about the significance of her thought, but it does inform us that she had a "beautiful appearance" and certain "gifts of the spirit and of the heart."[11]

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[7] S. C. Hause and A. Kenney, Women's Suffrage and Social Politics in the French Third Republic (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp. 237-8.

[8] Victor Margueritte, La Garçonne (Paris: Flammarion, 1922). As much as one quarter of the male population read it. See James F. McMillan, Housewife or Harlot: the Place of Women in French Society, 1870-1940 (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1981), p. 166.

[9] "Hands Off Love," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 9-10 (1 October 1927), pp. 1-6.

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[10] There is only one clear flapper in Surrealist art. She appears in Max Ernst's *La Femme 100 Têtes* (Paris: Carrefour, 1929); see the English edition, trans., D. Tanning (New York: Braziller, 1981), p. 67. Corsets and/or sensual curves, on the other hand, are to be found everywhere.

[11] André Breton, "Flora Tristan," *Le surréalisme, même*, no. 3 (1957); reprinted in his *Perspective cavalière*, ed. M. Bonnet (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), pp. 156-7. The same collection, incidentally, also includes an essay which describes a stone that resembles female genitalia emerging from the convolutions of a brain! See "Langage des pierres," p. 152, and plate III, fig. 1.

Behind all of these manifestations lay a fundamental assumption of masculine and feminine polarities. Breton's most famous statement regarding women, sometimes cited by latter-day Surrealists to indicate a pro-feminist stance, is no exception:

> The time will come when the ideas of woman will be asserted at the expense of those of man, the failure of which is today quite tumultuously apparent. Specifically, it is up to the artist to make visible everything that is part of the feminine, as opposed to the masculine, system of the world.[12]

Of course, this is a cliché of the Platonic rationalism which Surrealism claimed to oppose: logos was male, rational, and formal, whereas eros was female, intuitive, and emotional. That the Surrealists preferred the latter is of no consequence, for any adherence to the false polarity confirms the same patriarchal dominance.[13] Elsa Triolet was exalted by Louis Aragon until she ceased to be human; Gala Eluard was beloved by Dalí to the point of divinity; Suzanne Muzard was transformed by Breton into an ever-changing earth-goddess[14]--the list goes on and on, but in every case the reality of the flesh-and-blood woman evaporated in the intense light of the Surrealist image. This image, created and manipulated primarily by men, is the subject of this study.

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[12] André Breton, Arcane 17 (New York: Brentano's, 1945), pp. 89-90.

[13] Cf. Barbara White Kazanis, "The Myth of Masculine and Feminine Polarity," in J. Loeb, ed., Feminist Collage: Educating Women in the Visual Arts (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1979), pp. 176-84.

There is no single image of Woman in Surrealist art. The startling variety of apparent female types represented is a sufficient refutation of that notion. Nevertheless, it would not be historically correct to assert with the deconstructionists of today that all root meanings are transcendental--that is, that one cannot fix the particular meaning of an utterance at the time of speaking.[15] Indeed, the Surrealists may not have had a single definition of Woman, but they certainly subscribed to a temporally and ideologically limited set of conventions that anchored the shifting parameters of meaning in spite of all their claims to liberation. The mechanics of this unbidden construction or determination of Woman can perhaps be best understood by alluding briefly to the work of a linguist and a literary theorist, neither of whom concerned himself with Surrealism. The linguist is Noam Chomsky, whose concept of "generative-transformational grammar" is useful in explaining the image of Woman in spite of her multiple appearances. Chomsky proposed that all competent speakers of a language have intuitively learned a set of simple archetypal sentences which serve as a "deep structure," a framework of sorts that allows speakers to generate entirely new sentences through a group of transformational rules. The new "surface structures" thus remain meaningful to other speakers, despite their unfamiliarity, their novelty.[16] It is only the surface structure of the Surrealist image of Woman that is apparently infinite. The deep structure is composed of a surprisingly limited set of propositions, most of which are descendants of cultural--that is, unnatural, learned, or socially encoded--misapprehensions about what Woman is and wants. Some of them can be expressed in a single prophetic phrase, like Charles Baudelaire's "Woman is natural, that is to say abominable...."[17] Others are more complicated networks of allusions and connotations which can be unravelled if we think of them as a "horizon of expectations" determined by historical and cultural conditions. The literary theorist Hans Robert Jauss developed this notion of the horizon to indicate that a text will have meaning to a particular set of readers, even though it may have no ultimate, absolute, or objective significance. The meaning--a kind of implicit contract between the reader and the text--is spun upon the aesthetic, economic, linguistic, moral, political, and other expectations which are brought to it. Jauss called his theory a reception-aesthetic because meaning is conceived of as a function of the ways in which a text is received.[18] This idea alone, without its subsequent critical embellishments, is very close to the Surrealist attitude, which also placed the final responsibility for meaning on the shoulders of the onlooker, not the author. But since the onlooker was usually also a Surrealist, his horizon of expectations was substantially the same. This is not to say that the men were all of one opinion. Breton, for example, was appalled by brothels, whereas Aragon loved them.[19] Nevertheless, they were all partly formed by conventions and cultural fashions that were widespread in both bourgeois society and its antitheses.

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[14] Louis Aragon, Les Yeux d'Elsa (Paris: Maison française and Cahiers du Rhône, 1942); Salvador Dalí, L'amour et la mémoire (Paris: Editions Surréalistes, 1931); André Breton, "L'Union libre" (1931), Poèmes (Paris: Gallimard, 1948), pp. 65-7.

[15] One cannot avoid noting the seminal works of Jacques Derrida, of which De la grammatologie (Paris: Minuit, 1967) is the best known. The essays in the exhibition catalogue L'Amour fou: Photography and Surrealism (Washington: Corcoran Gallery of Art, 14 September-17 November 1985) are among the first to explore the applicability of some deconstructive notions to Surrealism.

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[16] Noam Chomsky, Syntactic Structures (The Hague: Mouton, 1957). A brief summary is given on pp. 106-8.

[17] This is further discussed in Chapter II, pp. 129-30.

The task of this study, therefore, is to sift through the surface structure of the image of Woman to find the misapprehensions which underlie its deep structure. In turn, this will expose the determinants of the Surrealist horizon of expectations. One might think that the best way to approach the visual artists would be to explore the influences of older artists, the positions which painters occupy in the hierarchy of modernism, and so forth. This is what has been done elsewhere time and again, with results ranging from the encyclopedic to the formally reductive.[20] Because this well-travelled route usually denatures the treatment of the image of Woman in its overemphasis on fantasy or form, it is not followed here. Besides, Surrealism always inclined towards rhetoric, even in its visual manifestations. One might go even further and assert that its horizon of expectations was a supremely intellectual hybrid closer to what is now called the history of ideas than to the history of art alone. All of the Surrealists sought inspiration outside their own fields, yet historians of the visual arts have only recently gone beyond passing allusions to examine precisely how, for example, even the least literary painters were deeply affected by literature. Joan Miró was long considered to be a playful primitive, completely free of intellectual preoccupation. In 1973, Margit Rowell questioned that commonly held opinion, discovering that Miró was greatly indebted to writers like Alfred Jarry, Arthur Rimbaud, Blaise Cendrars, and others.[21] The cross-fertilization worked both ways, of course, and we now know that a substantial component of Breton's concept of femininity was inspired by his adolescent infatuation with the women in the paintings of Gustave Moreau.[22] Nevertheless, there are still many unanswered questions: why did Ernst read Edgar Allan Poe and Otto Weininger, why did Magritte like detective stories, how did André Masson receive Johann Jakob Bachofen, and so on.

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[18] Hans Robert Jauss, Towards an Aesthetic of Reception, trans., T. Bahti (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982), pp. 3-45.

[19] Matthew Josephson, Life Among the Surrealists (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1962), pp. 135-8.

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[20] Hence we are presented with vague lists of predecessors or analyses of largely stylistic considerations. For the former, see Edward B. Henning, The Spirit of Surrealism (Cleveland: Cleveland Museum of Art, 3 October-25 November 1979). For the latter, see Rubin, passim.

Each of these questions and more will be dealt with in the course of this study. We present here four interrelated essays, three of which examine the image of Woman in Surrealist art from unfamiliar points of view. To say that they involve the influence of psychology, of mythology and the occult, and of literature would be something of a misrepresentation through over-simplification, for each essay speaks to its fellows in a way that expands--without exhausting--the significance of them all. The fourth essay is both a summary and a digression, raising two admittedly provocative questions: to what extent is Surrealism a relative of pornography, and to what extent were women artists compromised by their contact with it? Since the answers to both questions fall outside the reconstruction of the horizon of expectations, there will be no attempt to foreclose future contributions to the discussion.

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[21] Margit Rowell, "Magnetic fields: the poetics," in Joan Miró: Magnetic Fields (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 26 October 1972-21 January 1973), pp. 39-66.

[22] Marcel Spada, "Gustave Moreau et l'Eve nouvelle d'André Breton," in P. Bonnefils and P. Reboul, eds., Des mots et des couleurs (Lille: Université de Lille III, 1979), pp. 145-63.

The continuous thread that holds these observations together comes to the surface from time to time in the words "cultural" or "intellectual fashion." These terms are too familiar to require an extended definition, but a single example would not be inappropriate. André Masson once observed that he had willingly entered the Great War as a test of self.[23] His attitude was formed by a cultural fashion of about 1914, when

> No modes of thought were more readily resorted to than those, associated with debasements of Darwin and Nietzsche, that perfected the idiom of salubrious struggle and bracing domination.[24]

Debasement--or perhaps adulteration--is a frequent component of cultural fashion. One thinks of the poorly assimilated Zen of the beatniks of the 1950s or the trendy nihilism of the punk-rockers of the 1980s. It is important to note, however, that eastern mysticism and western anarchism also influenced other sectors of society, which adulterated them in their own ways. The situation in the 1920s and 1930s was a similar reciprocal definition of cultural fashion and its adherents. The Surrealist ideology thus confirmed and challenged public or intellectual interests which were themselves outside of the movement: Bachofen's writings inspired Masson, but they also excited Stefan George, a non-Surrealist poet working in Munich in the 1920s; Louis Feuillade's film serial Fantômas delighted Magritte, as well as tens of thousands of others who were utterly indifferent to imaginative revolution;[25] and, of course, Freud stimulated everyone. Somewhere in the shifting veils of conventions shared and denied, of codes endorsed and refuted, are the outlines of a Surrealist Woman. She remains, as will be seen, the creation of a patriarchal order whose antifeminism derives in spirit from the nineteenth century.

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[23] In conversation with Jean-Paul Clébert, Mythologie d'André Masson (Geneva: Cailler, 1971), p. 20.

[24] M. D. Biddiss, The Age of the Masses: Ideas and Society Since 1870 (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977), p. 179.

The perspicacious reader will now ask why we do not consider the various ways in which the Surrealist Woman was received later in our own century. To be sure, some of the "meanings" thus disclosed would be quite different from those of the Surrealists themselves. Unfortunately, to trace this development exhaustively would be to write what Jauss calls a reception-history--an endeavour which would certainly double the length of this investigation without an equal return in significance. A few notes must suffice, so that we may get to the task at hand all the more quickly.

Non-partisan critical opinion generally holds that

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[25] Michael and Erika Metzger, Stefan George (New York: Twayne, 1972), p. 170; F. Lacassin, Louis Feuillade (Paris: Seghers, 1965), passim.

Surrealism ceased to be of importance around 1941, when many of the painters and poets fled Europe, or perhaps in 1947, when most of them returned, only to find that Jean Dubuffet and Jean-Paul Sartre had replaced them in the limelight. The Surrealists fought back with an impressive series of international exhibitions in Paris, Copenhagen, London, New York, São Paolo, Tokyo, and elsewhere. The most recent major gathering was in Chicago in 1976, but even today artists continue to profess that they are Surrealists: the American Franklin Rosemont, the Chilean-Canadian Ludwig Zeller, and the Brazilian Sergio Lima are just a sample of those who continue to mine the same rich vein without questioning the purity of the minerals unearthed there. For example, Breton's Nadja, an account of his relationship with a mentally disturbed woman, is quite indifferent to her fate after she was hospitalized. Many years later, Barry Gifford wrote a strange little book entitled Nadja in Paradise; he did not concern himself with the real experiences of the woman either.[26]

Simone de Beauvoir was the first writer to recognize that the failure to grant Woman her subjectivity was the central flaw of Surrealism. In Le deuxième sexe (the second sex), she described the domination of society by males who could only see themselves as subjects, whereas women were always objects. Men were thus always directing thought or action, while women were only the things to which thought or action was directed. Surrealism was merely one expression among many of a one-sided Hegelian consciousness which set itself up as essential and all others as tributary. In the course of her investigation, Beauvoir surveyed the place of Woman in the poetry of André Breton. She explained key terms like elective love (freedom from legislative restrictions), reciprocal love (each sex must freely choose the other), unique love (a single Woman, salvation of all humanity, recognized in a succession of real women), and so on. She concluded that Breton's Woman was a key to the beyond even while anchored in nature: personifying beauty, truth, and poetry, Woman was everything for Breton but nothing for herself.[27] She was a stereotype.

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[26] André Breton, Nadja, trans. R. Howard (New York: Grove, 1960); Barry Gifford, Nadja in Paradise (Petaluma, California: Ten Mile River Press, 1984).

The Surrealists' first collective exhibition after the appearance of _Le deuxième sexe_ was the _Exposition inteRnatiOnale du Surréalisme_ of 1959-60. As the orthography shows, it was totally dedicated to Eros. The great variety of erotic expression seemed to be an unintended rebuttal of Beauvoir and of the notion that public interest was flagging.[28] Within five years the pendulum began to swing the other way. In 1965, for example, Robert Benayoun published his Erotique du surréalisme (the Surrealist erotic), a laudatory compilation of images and ideas drawn from four decades of artistic activity.[29] Breton died within a year, further provoking a revival of interest, and his name was on the lips of many during the Parisian student riots of 1968.[30] Now, this may have been partly due to the relaxed sexual atmosphere of the period, which linked unrestrictive libidinal gratification with social revolution on a plane that was more prosaic than anything the original Surrealists had imagined. In spite of this, one writer saw that an uncritical acceptance of Bretonian orthodoxy led to a social impasse. Going further than Beauvoir, whose tone was coolly reproachful, Xavière Gauthier bluntly stated that "the Surrealist woman is a male forgery." Moreover, her lengthy Surréalisme et sexualité (Surrealism and sexuality) explicitly tied the stereotypical Woman to a deeply entrenched phallicism--the veneration of the male generative organs as things magically superior to mere flesh. The

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[27] Simone de Beauvoir, _Le deuxième sexe, I: Les faits et les mythes_ (Paris: Gallimard, 1949), pp. 355-64.

[28] The whole of _Bief: jonction surréaliste_, no. 10-11 (15 February 1960), is a vociferous affirmation that the movement was alive and kicking. See, for example, José Pierre, "Miroirs voilés," unpaginated. The Eros show took place at the Galerie Daniel Cordier, Paris.

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[29] Robert Benayoun, Erotique du surréalisme, 2nd ed. (Paris: Pauvert, 1978).

[30] La Nouvelle revue française dedicated an entire issue to Breton, no. 72 (1 April 1967); see especially Maurice Blanchot, "Le demain joueur sur l'avenir du surréalisme," pp. 863-888. On the revival of student interest and its influence on contemporary research, see Marc Bertrand, "Suite surréaliste," Esprit créateur, XIII (1973), p. 166.

Surrealist revolution was thus a failure.[31]

Gauthier's research was inflected by a conscious political spirit bound to the era in which it was written. The present study is no less attached to its own period, which some would characterize as politically unconscious.[32] Because of this, we must examine more broadly based cultural phenomena. Otherwise, our central thesis is much the same as Gauthier's: Woman is not an autonomous entity. She is like a linguistic variable on a patriarchal scale reaching from the symbolic--where she is a passive vehicle for the conception of something else--to the fetishistic--where the symbol is reified and becomes a substitute for the meaning intended in lieu of its vehicle.[33] The roots of this conception lead every which way into culture, so we must not restrict ourselves to the central role played by Breton. Despite his charisma, he was only one of those contributing to the construction of Woman, like one of many stokers heaving different types of coal on a single fire, producing a single, ever-shifting cloud of smoke. Some of his claims will be taken into account,[34] but so will others which modify or even refute his ideas. This tendency, of course, is peculiar to the current era, which has seen yet another renewal of interest. We are in the midst of an ongoing reappraisal: there are still the inevitable popular glosses and synoptic essays, but they are gradually being supplemented by a body of new research ranging from surveys of women artists to more focussed accounts criticizing the Surrealist mentality altogether.[35] This, then, is just another voice.

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[31] Xaviére Gauthier, Surréalisme et sexualité (Paris: Gallimard, 1971), pp. 190, 269, and passim.

[32] The term is Fredric Jameson's. See his The Political Unconscious: Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act (Ithaca: Cornell, 1981).

[33] Cf. the definitions of symbols and fetishes in Howard R. Pollio, The Psychology of Symbolic Activity (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1974), p. 5; and Frederick J. Hacker, "Psychology and Psychopathology of Symbolism," in Joseph R. Boyce, ed., Psychology and the Symbol: An Interdisciplinary Symposium (New York: Random House, 1965), p. 84.

A final word: the arguments which follow make frequent reference to psychological terms and concepts. Their appearance does not indicate an assessment of mental health. The Surrealists were conversant with these terms and concepts in the same way that any follower of an intellectual fashion opts into a particular discourse. As Sander L. Gilman has noted:

> All structured systems of representations ...can be construed as "texts" for the study of stereotypes.... This is not to

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[34] The bibliography on Breton and woman grows more overwhelming almost daily. Two of the best and most accessible discussions are Maryse Laffite, "L'image de la femme chez Breton: contradictions et virtualités" *Revue romane*, XI, no. 2 (1976), pp. 286-305; and Paule Plouvier, *Poétique de l'amour chez André Breton* (Paris: Corti, 1983).

[35] Whitney Chadwick, *Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1985); Susan Gubar, "Representing Pornography: Feminism, Criticism, and Depictions of Female Violation," *Critical Inquiry*, XIII, no. 4 (Summer 1987), pp. 712-41. Other examples will be mentioned from time to time in the notes which follow.

> reduce the "work of art" to a system of stereotypical signifiers, but rather to stress that such systems are incorporated within the work of art, high or low, and shape the fictions that these works present.

Aside from implicitly restating Chomsky's basic thesis with specific reference to art and the creative process, the passage clearly indicates the fictional nature of "root metaphors," however elastic they may be.[36] This study, then, is finally about falsehood--but while it is highly critical of the Surrealist misrepresentation, it does not advocate that the offending material be censored or otherwise altered. To do so would simply remove from public view the evidence of cultural dispositions which need to be re-examined continually. Discussion is the means to our end--not censorship.

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[36] Sander L. Gilman, Difference and Pathology: Stereotypes of Sexuality, Race, and Madness (Ithaca: Cornell, 1985), p. 26. "Root metaphors" are explained on p.22.

Chapter I: A Surrealist History of the Mind

Sigmund Freud's Totem and Taboo was published in 1914, when most of Western civilization was preoccupied with the war to end all wars. When it finally reached the wide readership Freud had sought, it was attacked as implausible. Stripped to its core, the book posited a primordial, universally occurring series of events: in the beginning, a primitive, tribal horde was tyrannically governed by a powerful male leader with exclusive possession of the women of the tribe; soon, the sons of the tyrant, unable to find wives within the tribe and unwilling to look elsewhere, rose against him, murdered him, and stole his women; finally, the sons were overwhelmed by collective guilt, so they endowed a totem with the qualities of the murdered father. The totem, usually an animal, was to be sacrificially killed and eaten once a year, in order that the tribesmen might assimilate the lost father's power, expiate their guilt, and yet commemorate their own act of liberation. At all other times of year, the totem was subject to a taboo and was not to be disturbed in any way. Now, the ethnologists of Freud's time protested the implausibility of this series of events, especially with regard to Freud's universalizing conclusions:

> I should like to insist...that the beginnings of religion, morals, society,

> and art converge in the Oedipus complex ....[The] same complex constitutes the nucleus of all neuroses, insofar as our present knowledge goes....[The] problems of social psychology, too, should prove soluble on the basis of one single, concrete point--man's relation to his father.[1]

Of course, the primordial totemic banquet was not at all universal--even James George Frazer, whose various collations of sacrificial myth were a direct influence on Freud (see chapter II, note 92), acknowledged this. In spite of the voice of reason, as it were, Freud's notions caught the fancy of a number of his followers. In 1930, for example, Roger Money-Kyrle published The Meaning of Sacrifice, in which he argued that the ubiquitous Oedipal situation of childhood would always return in adulthood, but with new actors playing the roles of father, chief, totem, or god.[2] Why would Freud's theories be in the ascendant, in spite of their dubious objective value? Mircea Eliade has proposed two deceptively simple reasons: first was Freudianism's partial emergence over older psychologies, and second was its acceptance as a cultural fashion.[3]

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[1] Sigmund Freud, Totem and Taboo (1913-14), in The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud , eds. and trans. J. Strachey, A. Freud, et al. (London: Hogarth, 1953-1964), XIII, pp. 156-7. All subsequent references to Freud's writings in this edition will be signalled by S.E. and the volume number.

[2] Roger E. Money-Kyrle, The Meaning of Sacrifice (London: Leonard and Virginia Woolf and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis, 1930). See especially part one, chapter 6.

[3] Occultism, Witchcraft, and Cultural Fashions (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp. 4-5.

It seems that very few were resistant to the new fashion. Even Vladimir Lenin tried his hand at it when he wrote "Left-wing" Communism: An Infantile Disorder.[4] So it is no surprise at all that a young André Breton and his peers would have been captivated by some of the researches of Freud, even as they resisted others. But even in fragments, Freudianism was still a fashion: some pieces of the costume were agreeable and others were not. For example, René Magritte expressed the feelings of the whole group when he inveighed against interpretation, a standard practice in psychoanalysis: "Under all circumstances we will refuse to explain precisely what will not be understood."[5] This sentence was written in 1925, close to two years before Magritte joined the Parisian Surrealists. However, in spite of this--perhaps because of it--the sentence expresses all the more forcibly the superficial character of cultural fashion in general. It is as if a number of the artists of this generation had said, "We will exploit what lay revealed before us, but we will not be held responsible." In other words, Surrealism rejected that portion of Freudianism which demanded analysis and therapy. The dream-like images of Surrealism are not and never were mere dreams, so they were not symptomatic of a psychic disorder to be corrected. Nicholas Calas put it this way: "Freud's patients are merely victims; the poet, by the sole fact that he creates, is a hero...."[6] André Masson made the point absolutely clear: "The first thing the Surrealists should have detested was psychoanalysis."[7] Nevertheless, the movement may be understood as symptomatic of a cultural disorder which cannot be fully separated from the syncretic meanderings of the Surrealists themselves.

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[4] (New York: International Publishers, 1940). This seems all the stranger given the marked differences in ideological orientation between Freud and Marx. See F. H. Bartlett, Sigmund Freud: A Marxian Essay (London: Gollanz, 1930), pp. 26, 66-7, 74-96; T. Johnston, Freud and Political Thought (New York: Citadel, 1965), pp. 81-95; M. G. Kalin, The Utopian Flight from Unhappiness: Freud against Marx on Social Progress (Chicago: Nelson-Hall, 1974), pp. 153-9; and Reuben Osbert, Freud and Marx: A Dialectical Study (London: Gollanz, 1937), pp. 133, 251.

[5] René Magritte, "Textes de Oesophage," in his Écrits complets, ed. A. Blavier (Paris: Flammarion, 1979), p. 30.

a) The Psychic Grab-bag

It used to be thought that the influence of psychology on Surrealism was strictly as an exploitable source of suggestions to revise formal and stylistic approaches.[8] This is a profound misunderstanding. Breton and his fellows were deadly serious that their gleanings of psychology would help them to begin a permanent revolution in which the unrestricted imagination would forever be "on the point of reasserting itself, of reclaiming its rights."[9] Since it is a characteristic of revolutionaries to transgress everything which limits personal freedom, it should come as no surprise that Breton and his followers would refuse to be fettered by what they saw as the limitations of Freudianism. Moreover, the revolutionary temperament was accompanied by an actual history of appropriations from the annals of psychology, the written history of the mind, and Freud was not the first object of the Surrealist scavenger hunt. That honour falls to Dr. Emmanuel Régis, whose *Précis de psychiatrie* was first published in 1887. In 1916, Breton read Régis's *Précis* in its fifth edition, wherein the Freudian process of free-association underwent an important shift of focus. In place of the Austrian psychoanalyst's emphasis on analysis with a doctor present,[10] Régis suggested an auto-analysis:

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[6] Quoted in Frederick J. Hoffmann, Freudianism and the Literary Mind (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1945), p. 108. The italics are Calas's.

[7] Deborah Rosenthal, "Interview with André Masson," Arts, LV, no. 3 (November 1980), p. 93.

[8] Hoffman, pp. 104-9. The same sort of assumption lurks behind the otherwise very useful essay by S. Dresden, "Psychoanalysis and Surrealism," in P. Horden, ed., Freud and the Humanities (London: Duckworth, 1985), pp. 110-29.

> With the absolute neutrality of an unconcerned outside witness or, if you wish, of a simple recording instrument, the subject himself should jot down all the thoughts...that are crossing his mind.[11]

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[9] André Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," p. 10. Subsequent references will be retained in the text.

[10] This is to be found everywhere. A good example of the early years is in *Studies on Hysteria* (1893-5), *S.E.*, II, pp. 275-6.

[11] Emmanuel Régis, *Précis de psychiatrie*, 5th ed. (Paris: Doin, 1914), p. 40.

Breton, who was at that very moment initiating himself into the imaginative word-associations and unconscious immersions of Arthur Rimbaud,[12] was so enchanted by Régis's analogy of mechanical transcription that he quoted it in a letter of 31 August 1916 to Théodore Fraenkel.[13] Eight years later, when he was composing the epoch-making "Manifesto of Surrealism," Breton still could not forget the image: defining automatism as "the actual functioning of thought...in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern" (p. 26), the poet described himself and his fellow automatists as "simple receptacles of so many echoes, modest *recording instruments*..." (pp. 27-8, Breton's italics).

Breton and Philippe Soupault had actually practiced a type of automatism well before the "Manifesto," of course. In 1919, they had published *Les champs magnétiques*, a dizzying collection of writings garnered without conscious control.[14] At this very moment, Breton became acquainted with Dr. Alphonse Maeder, a well-known summarizer of Freud.[15] Yet in spite of this, the authors of Les champs magnétiques based themselves upon neither Freud nor Régis's presentation of his thought, but upon the older works of a French academic psychologist, Pierre Janet. Janet had written a major treatise on psychological automatism in 1889, and although he characterized the phenomenon as an inferior mental process--he felt that madness was a purely involuntary "psychological automatism given over to itself"[16]--his work inspired Breton and Soupault to release their minds "from all critical pressures and from academic habits [to offer] images and not logical propositions and...a 'universe' hitherto unexplored."[17] If one of the characteristics of Surrealism was its willfullness in retaining some elements of its research while disdainfully rejecting others, then we see Surrealism here, even before Breton's first, tentative definition of 1922, in turn two years before the "Manifesto":

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[12] André Breton, *Entretiens (1913-1952)*, rev. ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), p. 36. Still useful in understanding the influence of Rimbaud is Wallace Fowlie's *Age of Surrealism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1950), pp. 45-62.

[13] See Marguerite Bonnet, *André Breton, naissance de l'aventure surréaliste* (Paris: Corti, 1975), pp. 103-4, The issue is thoroughly discussed in Jennifer Gibson, "Surrealism Before Freud: Dynamic Psychiatry's 'Simple Recording Instrument'," *Art Journal*, XLVI, no. 1 (Spring 1987), pp. 56-60.

[14] Fragments appeared in the vehicle of Parisian Dada, *Littérature*, nos. 8-10 (October-December 1919). The whole appeared in book form as *Les champs magnétiques* (Paris: Au sans pareil, 1920). The title is a pun: *champs* = *chants*, magnetic fields = magnetic songs or, more poetically, cantos.

> [Surrealism] designates a certain psychic automatism, a near equivalent to

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[15] See his letter of 12 June 1919 to Tristan Tzara in Michel Sanouillet, Dada à Paris (Paris: Pauvert, 1965), p. 446.

[16] Pierre Janet, L'automatisme psychologique: essai de psychologie expérimentale sur les formes inférieures de l'activité humaine (Paris: Alcan, 1889), p. 477. An excellent short discussion of Janet's influence is in Anna Balakian, André Breton: Magus of Surrealism (New York: Oxford, 1971), pp. 28-34.

[17] Philippe Soupault, Profils perdus (Paris: Mercure de France, 1963), p. 166.

> the dream state, whose limits are today quite difficult to define.[18]

With the words "dream state," Breton signalled, finally, that Freud's thought was of particular interest. The poet had his reservations, however: he had actually visited Freud the previous year and found him a trifle bourgeois and uninterested in discussing the French school of psychologists.[19] Presumably in order to help himself overcome his objections to Freud, as well as to provide a connecting link to those portions of Janet he found acceptable, Breton began to read psychological discussions of a type of automatism which was not symptomatic of mental illness--mediumistic trances. Indeed, the first definition of Surrealism above came in an article entitled "The Entrance of the Mediums."

It is at this point that the psychic grab-bag of Surrealism begins to dovetail with the theme of Woman, for it has long been supposed that females are more intuitive, more inclined to clairvoyance and the like, than males. Freud himself had more than a passing interest in occult phenomena,[20] but Breton seems not to have been aware of it. Instead, he turned to the early parapsychological writings of Frederic W. H. Myers, whose *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* was published in 1903, two years after its author's death. It is not clear that Breton read Myers in translation first or if he read the re-presentations of his work by Théodore Flournoy.[21] In any case, what distinguished Myers' point of view was his idea that normal consciousness is extended by a supraliminal or "metetherial" consciousness, access to which could only be gained through "abnormal" states like sleep, hypnosis, and mediumistic automatism.[22] The latter was the most important to Breton, although the others did have their day, so to speak,[23] and it is imperative to qualify it in two ways: first, Myers did not conceive of automatism as a disaggregation of the personality, as did Janet; and second,

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[18] "L'Entrée des médiums," Littérature, no. 6, new series (1 November 1922). Reprinted in Les Pas perdus (Paris: Gallimard, 1924), pp. 123-4.

[19] "Interview de Professeur Freud à Vienne," Littérature, no. 1, new series (1 March 1922), p. 19. We have no way of knowing if Breton's dissatisfaction was due to language problems, egotism, or any other such factors. Breton himself later implied that it was just his then-Dadaistic temperament (Entretiens, p. 82).

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[20] See Christian Moreau, *Freud et l'occultisme: l'approche freudienne du spiritisme, de la divination, de la magie et de la télépathie* (Toulouse: Privat, 1976), pp. 50-6, 118-9, 205-6.

[21] See Breton, *Entretiens*, p. 82. An excellent exposition of the whole topic is Jean Starobinski, "Freud, Breton, Myers," in his *La Relation critique, II: L'oeil vivant* (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), pp. 320-41.

[22] This is as summarized by Théodore Flournoy, "F. W. H. Myers et son oeuvre posthume," *Archives de psychologie*, II, no. 7 (1903), pp. 269-296. Breton appears to have been exposed to this by Dr. Raoul Leroy, when he was an assistant in a military centre for psychiatric disorders at Saint-Dizier. See Breton's *Entretiens*, p. 36.

[23] Réné Crevel introduced hypnotic trances as early as September 1922, and Robert Desnos was renowned for his "sleep-talking." See Breton's *Entretiens*, pp. 89-90.

Myers' principal exemplar of motor automatism--which Surrealism would christen "automatic writing"--was a woman.

Elise Mueller, known as Hélène Smith, was a perfect example of "continuous and complex subliminal mentation going on in a perfectly healthy and normal organism."[24] This meant that her automatism, which consisted of communication with Martians, Venusians, and Uranians, among other things, was not a disorder but a compelling index of the mind's ability to intrude into supraliminal consciousness. Now, Myers was essentially a spiritualist--an occultist who hoped to prove the existence of an eternal soul behind all of these manifestations. Quite to the contrary, Breton rejected the existence of spirits, the possibility of communication with the dead, and other spiritualist phenomena *per se*.[25] In their place, he posited very simply

> *one original faculty*...All who have striven to define the true human condition have aspired...to regain that state of grace. I say automatism alone provides access to it...this point where the distinction between subjective and objective ceases to be necessary or useful.[26]

Inasmuch as Breton found Hélène Smith's automatism an admirable model, one might think that he had in mind an active role for women in general in fomenting the Surrealist revolution. But whenever the subject was brought up, Breton restricted the role of real women to playing the voyante, a female seer who could, at best, catalyze men into an alchemical transubstantiation of themselves through sexual desire. Women themselves, however, were like the philosopher's stone of Nicolas Flamel--disposable:

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[24] Frederic W. H. Myers, *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death* (London: Longman's, Green and Co., 1903), II, chapter 8, units 834-841.

[25] *Entretiens*, pp. 86-7. See also chapter II, pp. 105-7.

[26] "Le message automatique," *Minotaure*, nos. 3-4 (14 December 1933), p. 65. The italics are Breton's.

> It is up to you, ladies, to make us confuse that which can be accomplished with that which has been accomplished.... [That] passivity...I beseech you to give it up. Your homes will be invaded on the eve of the happy catastrophe. Do not abandon us.... Give us your [precious] stones, brilliant stones, to drive away the vile priests. We no longer see this world as it is.... Here, already, is love.[27]

The active role that Breton proffers in place of the passive one is an illusion. He himself acknowledged that automatism required a "passive, or receptive...state of mind" ("Manifesto," p. 29). Moreover, he knew that Hélène Smith acted only as the passive recipient of advice from a male spirit named Léopold.[28]

For a male Surrealist, to transform reality meant to realize those desires which were inhibited by bourgeois morality--desires which were, more often than not, of a sexual nature. This necessary fusion of love, sexuality and revolution can be demonstrated with two brief excerpts from collective tracts. The first, entitled "Hands Off Love," was inspired by the celebrated divorce case of Charlie Chaplin. Mrs. Chaplin's grounds were inhumanity and immorality. Thirty-two Surrealists, including Breton and the artists Jean Arp, Max Ernst, André Masson, Man Ray and Yves Tanguy, signed a declaration which asserted that sexual relations directed only towards procreation were a bourgeois sham and that Chaplin's immorality--specifically, his desire to be fellated and to have a _ménage à trois_ with his wife and a young girl--was in fact "Love sudden and immediate, before all else the great, irresistible summons."[29] Three years later, thirteen Surrealists, now including Salvador Dalí, defended his and Luis Buñuel's film _L'Age d'or_ from accusations of blasphemy, obscenity, sadism, sedition, and so on:

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[27] "Lettre aux voyantes," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 5 (15 October 1925), pp. 21-2. Flamel and the philosopher's stone are mentioned on p. 20. See the more extensive discussion in chapter II, pp. 172-91.

[28] "Le message automatique," p. 61.

> Psychoanalysis can be accused of having created the greatest confusion in this area, since the very problem of love has remained outside the signs that accompany it.... Love...demands the sacrifice of everything: status,

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[29] "Hands Off Love," p. 5. The title is in English because the tract originally appeared in the English review _Transition_ (September 1927).

> family, honour, the failure of which within the social framework leads to revolt.[30]

In spite of the repudiation of psychoanalysis, the Surrealists' conception of love as an odd amalgam of compulsion, desire, revolt, and sex returns us in a strange way to a central Freudian point: love is always an irresistible urge directed towards an object. The object is not conceived as having the same order of urges--one might even go so far as to say humanity.

In late January 1928, fifteen Surrealists participated in a series of "Recherches sur la sexualité." Employing the euphemism attitudes passionelles, Breton asked his peers which sexual positions they favoured. Fellation was mentioned by all respondents. Aragon then asked what was most exciting. The answers read like a list of body parts: legs, thighs, buttocks, breasts, armpits, mouth, teeth, and eyes. Only three of the respondents thought to mention female orgasm.[31] Worse yet, when the poet Benjamin Péret remarked that he always asked the opinion of his female companion as to the manner of making love, Breton and at least one other, Jacques Prévert, found it amazing. When asked why, the leader of the group replied, "It's quite out of place." When Pierre Unik retorted that the contrary was quite out of place, Breton said that he didn't give a damn.[32]

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[30] There is no proper title for the text, which was inserted into the program for the first screenings of L'Age d'or (12 November 1930). A facsimile was published in L'Avant-scène du cinéma, nos. 27-8, and it has been translated as "Manifesto of the Surrealists concerning L'Age d'or," in Paul Hammond, ed., The Shadow and Its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on Cinema (London: British Film Institute, 1978), pp. 118-20.

[31] "Recherches sur la sexualite," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 11 (15 March 1928), p. 39.

To speak of love-objects as such is to speak of possession; desire, inasmuch as it is the driving mechanism of love, can be directed at any object that is capable of sating it or that is capable of being possessed. Freud wrote:

> Loving in itself, insofar as it is longing and deprivation, lowers self-regard, whereas being loved, having one's love returned and possessing the loved object raises it once more.[33]

This kind of love, suffused with desire, is an endlessly ascending curve that can never be fully resolved. Breton may have proposed the existence of a unique woman, but he also claimed that she could be recognized in many women (see above, p. 18), all of whom he thought of as gateways to the beyond, here in this life. They were indeed like philosopher's stones --discardable once the transformation was complete. Yet the Surrealist transformation never ends, so the women are restlessly picked up and discarded like pebbles on a beach. Freudianism characterizes this state of affairs as potentially Oedipal: love begins with complete dependence upon the love-object, originally the mother; the subject subsequently tries to find the unique woman who will sustain and nourish him in a more explicitly sexual, but otherwise like manner; and his interest will shift from woman to woman as he perceives here and there one or another reflection of his infantile satiety. Finally, the subject denies his dependence upon women, asserting that it is he who manipulates the power-relations. One is alarmed to note that this is precisely what Breton wrote in the "Manifesto" (p. 17): "And anyway, isn't what matters that we be the masters of ourselves, the masters of women, and of love too?"

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[32] Ibid., p. 34. The French phrase, "Ce n'est pas de mise," is idiomatic and might be translated "it's out of place (improper, unseemly)," or "that has nothing to do with it."

[33] On Narcissism: An Introduction (1914), S.E., XIV, p.99.

Breton's tone is patronizing and patriarchal--but then, so is Freud's. Some of the Austrian psychoanalyst's pronouncements seem astoundingly narrow-minded in retrospect. When he read John Stuart Mill's celebrated essay on The Subjection of Women (1869), he immediately ridiculed the philosopher's position as unheard of and untenable.[34] The thirty-third lecture of his New Introductory Lectures on Psycho-Analysis characterized women as sexually inactive or frigid, essentially narcissistic, and able to love another only insofar as the other reflected part of themselves.[35] Even more notorious were his notions of essential female masochism and penis envy.[36] But it would not be to the point to compound instances of Freud's limitations with respect to women without exposing to what extent they influenced Surrealism. Not surprisingly, Breton has been the prime object of study in this regard.[37] In spite of his reservations, the poet's ideas overlapped with those of Freud in a number of significant ways. For instance, the Surrealist notion of "objective chance"--surprising encounters with unforeseen people, things, or events which reveal a repressed wish, usually involving women[38]--is not significantly different from Freud's discussions of parapraxes, an example of which is the classic "Freudian slip," or what he called "the omnipotence of thought."[39] Both the poet and the doctor take apparently clairvoyant phenomena and treat them naturalistically as the results of unconscious psychological determinism.

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[34] Letter to Martha Bernays, 15 Nov 1883, in Letters of Sigmund Freud, ed. E. L. Freud, trans. T. and J. Stern (New York: Basic, 1960), pp. 74-6.

[35] "Femininity (1933)," S.E., XXII, pp. 112-35.

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[36] See Owen J. Flanagan, Jr., "Freud: Masculinity, Femininity, and the Philosophy of Mind," in M. Vetterling-Braggin, ed., "Femininity", "Masculinity", and "Androgyny": A Modern Philosophical Discussion (Totowa: Littlefield, Adams and Co., 1982), pp. 60-76; and Judith Van Herik, Freud on Femininity and Faith (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982).

[37] Two unpublished works have done this most extensively: William R. Underwood, "André Breton and Freud" (Ph.D. diss., Rutgers University, 1972); and Martin Noval, "The Unconscious in Freud and Breton" (Ph.D. diss., University of Waterloo, 1973).

[38] Objective chance is fruitfully discussed in Michel Carrouges, André Breton and the Basic Concepts of Surrealism, trans. M. Prendergast (University: University of Alabama Press, 1974), pp. 179-219. Carrouges stresses Breton's connections to occult practices, however.

[39] On the former, see Freud, Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, (1916-17), S.E., XV, pp. 77-8. On the latter, see chapter II, pp. 140-1.

How were Surrealists exposed to Freud? The painter André Masson provided an illuminating answer:

> At the Bureau of Surrealist Research, a copy of [Freud's] Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis occupies a place of honour, right alongside the popular novel Fantômas, with its innumerable episodes, and of course [Lautréamont's] Les Chants de Maldoror.[40]

It is clear that the psychic grab-bag was filled with all sorts of sources of evocative images. Each source was inflected by a variety of others. The Surrealist dress code was eclectic indeed.

b) Freudian Glosses

Jack Spector has written that some Surrealist symbols came straight out of Freud: phallic noses and bones can be found in any number of works by Salvador Dalí, René Magritte and Yves Tanguy.[41] Indeed, the tenth of the Introductory Lectures mentioned by Masson includes many such symbols, demonstrating what has now become a cliché: anything long and upstanding is a phallus; anything enclosing a hollow space is a vagina. It might be supposed that this is a relatively harmless, sophomoric game of sorts, but some of the Freudian devices appropriated by the Surrealists were infused with a violence that inescapably coloured the way in which they were used. One such was the image of a person being run down in the street by a passing vehicle, which Freud described as symbolic of the sex act.[42] In 1926, Yves Tanguy made an untitled painting (fig. 1) of this very motif: a young girl in a red dress lies beneath the wheels of a cart, from which in turn a tree sprouts, the branches of which are threads applied directly onto the canvas. The other elements of the picture make it clear that its author was interested primarily in compounding the elementary symbolism of the sex act--certainly they are too dispassionately painted to evoke any aesthetic interest. Indeed, in the Introductory Lectures one finds penises hidden in trees and fishes; the box-like cavity into which the tree is inserted is, of course, a vagina; and the ambiguous water in which the fish swim is the birth element.[43] The picture's meaning is thus overdetermined, overly rich and redundant. Yet, William Rubin's characterization of it as "primitive" and "Rousseau-esque"[44] serves only to obscure the disturbing ramifications of the whole: sex is necessarily violent and concludes with the defeat of the female principle and the triumph of the male one. The phallic tower, after all, seems to command both the picture plane and, through its weather-vane (with the missing cock?), the four cardinal points. Surely Salvador Dalí was after the same thing in _Un chien andalou_, his 1928 filmic collaboration with Luis Buñuel, when his hero becomes sexually aroused at the sight of a similar street accident.[45]

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[40] "Le peintre et ses fantasmes," in his Le Rebelle du surréalisme: Ecrits, ed. F. Will-Levaillant (Paris: Hermann, 1976), p. 31. The edition to which he referred is L'Introduction à la Psychanalyse, trans. S. Jankélévitch (Paris: Payot, 1922).

[41] The Aesthetics of Freud: A Study in Psychoanalysis and Art(New York: Praeger, 1972), p. 155.

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[42] Introductory Lectures, S.E., XV, p. 157.

[43] Ibid., pp. 153-6, 160-1, 191, and elsewhere. The Standard Edition provides indices of symbols and dreams which read, perhaps not surprisingly, like Surrealist checklists.

[44] William Rubin, Dada, Surrealism, and Their Heritage (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 27 March-9 June 1968), p. 102.

There is reason to believe that the Surrealists borrowed more from Freud than the occasional isolated symbol and that they did so in spite of Breton's proscription of "any preconceived subject" ("Manifesto," p. 29). For example, Max Ernst painted _Deux soeurs_ (Two sisters, fig. 2) in 1926, adding details in oil to a pencil rubbing which was presumably automatic. Now, rubbing was called _frottage_, a process which Ernst defined as equivalent to automatic writing and which, importantly, would reveal obsessions hidden within the author. Presumably, the author wanted to attend the birth of his own work like a spectator, but the hidden obsessions had to be revealed by adding, elaborating, and adjusting what had appeared automatically.[46] Of course, this is another form of psychological determinism. The determinant appears to have been a dream recounted in Freud's Introductory Lectures. A man encounters his sister in the street in the company of two unfamiliar women who are themselves sisters. He shakes hands warmly with the latter couple but refuses to touch his own sister. Freud's interpretation ran to the effect that the dreamer had an unconscious sexual desire for his own sister. Because these urges are taboo, he unconsciously displaced them onto other sisters, whose number signalled the source of the dreamer's obsession--two sisterly breasts.[47] We are not surprised, then, to find that Ernst has strongly articulated the breasts of one of his two sisters, as well as reducing their heads to mammary ovoids. Nor, for that matter, is it surprising that Ernst began to speak at this time of an obsession in his youth involving the birth of a sister, the death of a pet, and a dangerous confusion between birds, humans, and siblings.[48]

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[45] The victim of the accident is sometimes described as an androgyne. See, for example, Dawn Ades, _Dalí_ (London: Thames and Hudson, 1982), p. 51. The actress, however, is quite clearly female, and the scenario which Breton had Luis Buñuel preface as the only authoritative one describes her only as a girl: _jeune fille_. See "Un chien andalou," _La Révolution Surréaliste_, no. 12 (15 December 1929), p. 35. The film falls a little short of the scenario, which describes the accident as "horribly mutilating." William F. Van Wert sidesteps the issue in his "Women in Surrealist Films," _Dada/Surrealism_, VI (1976), p. 80. Otherwise, he agrees that women are always objects.

Ernst's relations with his sisters have provided fodder for the interpretation of many of his works, especially the plates in his collage-novel La Femme 100 Têtes (1929) with individual captions like "Perturbation, my sister, la femme 100 têtes."[49] Charlotte Stokes, for one, maintains that such images and captions make clear reference to Ernst's autobiography.[50] This opens up the possibility of a Freudian analysis to the effect that the artist really had incestuous desires for one of his sisters. Nevertheless, this is precisely what we must not do, for that would be to believe in the objective validity of Freudian cultural fashion. It would be far more to the point to note that Ernst was fully aware that he was playing an elaborate game with the fashion as such.[51] Everything that he made, therefore, was to operate like an in-joke. This is itself Freudian, as Charlotte Stokes has pointed out in another context: the fingers protruding from behind the nut in Ernst's well-known Oedipus Rex (1921, fig. 3) are puns on breasts, while the nut itself is a pun on the female sex organs, the fingers penetrating the window are a pun on copulation, and so on.[52] Clearly, the implication is that one will get the joke if one is sufficiently familiar with Freud's Oedipus complex and with Ernst's own relations with his father, whom he characterized as tyrannical, buffoonish, and sexually ferocious.[53] Armed with this knowledge--which we assert may be entirely fictitious--Carlo Sala has interpreted Oedipus Rex as a meditation on castration anxiety and fear of the truth regarding the sexual comportment of the artist's parents.[54] More recent scholarship has de-emphasized autobiographical readings, asserting that the painting's elaborate allusions and punning structure go beyond the exploitation of psychoanalytic mythology to the central theme of image generation, Freudian condensations, and puns as a formal mechanism of innovation, itself more important than the specific content described.[55] This conclusion echoes one of Freud's assertions to the effect that the form of a joke is more important than its content.[56] Similarly, one might argue that the practice of collage--cutting and pasting--is a decontextualization that is more important than meaning. From the point of view of the image of women, however, this is psychic camouflage: Freud also asserted that the two main purposes of jokes were to express hostility and sexual desire in a polite context.[57] In other words, this all goes to say what we already know. Most jokes are only funny when the listener is not the recipient of the veiled aggression--and most jokes about women are no longer funny at all.

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[46] Max Ernst, Beyond Painting, and other writings by the artist and his friends, ed. R. Motherwell (New York: Wittenborn, Schulze, 1948), pp. 7-9.

[47] Introductory Lectures, S.E., XV, p. 196.

[48] "Some data on the youth of M.E., as told by himself," in Ernst, Beyond Painting, pp. 26-9. See also chapter II, pp. 185-7.

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[49] The accepted English translation sidesteps the pun (100 = cent = sans = without): The Hundred Headless Woman, trans., D. Tanning (New York: Braziller, 1981), p. 83.

[50] "La Femme 100 Têtes by Max Ernst" (Ph.D. diss., University of Washington, 1977), p. 162.

[51] See Jimmy Ernst, A Not-so-Still Life: A Memoir (New York: St. Martin's/Marek, 1984), pp. 108, 262. There, Max Ernst is described as fully conscious of the games he played with art critics and historians.

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[52] "Collage as Jokework: Freud's theories of wit as the foundation for the collages of Max Ernst," Leonardo, XV, no. 3 (Summer 1982), pp. 199-204.

[53] See John Russell, Max Ernst: Life and Work (New York: Abrams, 1967), p. 14.

[54] Max Ernst et la démarche onirique (Paris: Klincksieck, 1970), pp. 30-2.

[55] Stokes, "Collage as Jokework," foreshadows the more explicit statements to this effect in Elizabeth Legge, "Max Ernst's Oedipus Rex and the Implicit Sphinx," Arts, LXI, no. 1 (September 1986), pp. 50-3.

[56] Freud, Jokes and Their Relation to the Unconscious (1905), S.E., VIII, pp. 17, 140-58.

Ernst's La Femme 100 Têtes is full of outdated jokes referring to women as inherently masochistic or fetishized. The plate with the caption "Baggage check-in is worth a title of nobility" (fig. 4) is a complicated mixture of such jokes. To a scene of a man approaching the ticket counter in a train station, Ernst has added a priest playing a horn, a halo made from a gauge of sorts, and the naked, bound figure of a Russian Jewess undergoing torture.[58] The result is a macabre fusion which evokes ritual sacrifice (cf. chapter II), the Marquis de Sade (a title of nobility?), voyeurism (the ticket-buyer and the ticket-seller), the subjugation of women (the masochistic baggage), and the celebration of this triumph (the priest). In the following plates, the ticket-buyer goes on a little journey. At one point, he is chased from the train by a woman wielding a chemist's flask, demanding: "Open your bag, my good man" (fig. 5). He is obviously fleeing in terror, for if he were to open his suitcase, the female arm attached to it would fall away, a fate confirmed by the hand at the right dropping an umbrella. This does not mean simply that he is afraid of losing some female body parts picked up in the aftermath of the torture in the station. Quite to the contrary, he is afraid of losing his own body parts, fetishistically symbolized by the expropriated female arm. Of course, Ernst knew well that Freud had explicitly linked the resolution of castration anxiety to the ability to project the phallus onto those parts of the female body most shaped like cylinders.[59] The traveller, therefore, is fleeing emasculation. In other words, Ernst's three-fold joke is that Woman represents a castration threat because she has no penis; in order to allay anxiety, the male observer must consciously or unconsciously provide her with one; and the best way to do this is to dismember her and fetishize her body parts. It seems highly unlikely that the in-joke is really Ernst's autobiography, as is often asserted.[60] More plausible is an interpretation which takes humourless wordplay into account. In either case, female autonomy fades like vapour in the hot sun of male phallic idolatry.

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[57] Ibid., p. 101. Elsewhere, Freud wrote that a man listening to smut laughs "as though he were the spectator of an act of sexual aggression" (pp. 140-1)!

[58] On the sources of the collage, see Stokes, "La Femme 100 Têtes by Max Ernst," pp. 183-6.

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[59] See principally "The Uncanny," S.E., XVII, pp. 234-9; and "The Medusa's Head," S.E., XVIII, p. 273; as well as the discussion in chapter III.

Breton thought puns and jokes were very useful, in his own exceedingly cheerless way:

> Plays on words deserve our attention for...the absence of any comic element, which was supposed to be inherent to the genre and which was enough to get it a bad name.... Words, besides, have finished playing. Words make love.[61]

And so, presumably, do visual images "make love." After all, "Open your bag, my good man" shows that the male element has been thrust, in a sense, into the female one. Moreover, we seem to have caught Surrealism itself in a compromising position, as it were, for all of the most well-known visual puns have at their root a patriarchal assumption that women are essentially playthings. Man Ray's _Violon d'Ingres_ (fig. 6) of 1924 is a photograph of the famous model and singer Kiki of Montparnasse in the manner of Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres's _Bather of Valpinçon_ (1808). Ray acknowledged the debt to the nineteenth-century academician by superimposing over Kiki's body the soundholes of a violin, of which Ingres was known to be an aficionado--to such a degree that the phrase violon d'Ingres was coined to connote a hobby or pastime.[62] Besides, to the ear of the artist, who was raised in Philadelphia and Brooklyn, the sound of the French idiom would have been indistinguishable from violons dingue: an ungrammatical image fusing "let's rape" and "daft." Surely the result does more than evoke "the ancient metaphor of a woman's body being like a musical instrument."[63] It also maintains the status quo of relations between the sexes: the men are the artists and the women are the pleasant diversions--all the more so when there is a possibility of mental and sexual oppression. Breton was quite right: the comic element grows more absent all the time.

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[60] Stokes, "_La Femme 100 Têtes_ by Max Ernst," p. 183. Cf. Werner Spies, _Max Ernst. Loplop: The Artist in the Third Person_, trans. J. W. Gabriel (New York: Braziller, 1983), pp. 105-6; and Uwe Schneede, _The Essential Max Ernst_, trans. R. W. Last (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), p. 121.

[61] _Les Pas perdus_, pp. 170-1.

The least funny puns are those which involve the female eye, especially where mutilation plays a role. In the opening sequence of Un chien andalou, Dalí's co-author Luis Buñuel plunges a razor into what some rudimentary cross-editing suggests is a female eye (fig. 7). Commonplace interpretations of the scene acknowledge the subversive jolt of the image but tend to downplay its significance with technical or stylistic jargon. One such interpretation describes the sequence as anti-avant-garde parallelism, for the immediately preceding shots show a thin cloud slicing the face of the full moon. The result is that darkness (the shutting off of the light of the moon) is equivalent to blindness (a standard trope for inner vision)--that is, the time of dreams equals the time of poetic inspiration.[64] A more recent essay into the film describes the incident as a metaphor of film-making as both vision and cutting or editing.[65] It is probable that such explanations ignore more blatant Freudian readings because Freudianism itself is partly out of fashion and invites condemnation as bad biography. Curiously, Buñuel had this to say:

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[62] See the miscellaneous letters in Ingres raconté par lui-même et par ses amis, I: Pensées et écrits du peintre (Geneva: Cailler, 1957), p. 139. The Bather is reproduced on p. 64.

[63] Roland Penrose, Man Ray (London: Thames and Hudson, 1975), p. 92.

> NOTHING, in the film, SYMBOLIZES ANYTHING. The only investigation of the symbols would be, perhaps, psychoanalysis.[66]

If we set aside for the moment the possibility that Dalí and Buñuel really had sexually violent personalities--although it should be noted that both have at least claimed this to be the case[67]--then we can only use Freudianism as an analytical tool to understand how the Surrealist intellectual climate influenced the film even before its authors joined the movement, a phenomenon Buñuel has acknowledged.[68] This returns us to a more straightforward explanation of the sequence. Simply put, the razor is a standard Freudian phallus and the female eye into which it is thrust is a vagina, an association centuries in age.[69] Intercourse, presumably viewed as a castration threat because of the inevitable detumescence of the male, must be accompanied by a retributive violence which preserves male strength--the blade does not wither--and which punishes the threatening evil eye, so to speak.

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[64] Cf. J. H. Matthews, Surrealism and Film (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1971), p. 85.

[65] Linda Williams, Figures of Desire: A Theory and Analysis of Surrealist Film (Urbana: University of Illinois, 1981), pp. 82-3.

[66] Luis Buñuel, "Notes on the Making of Un chien andalou," in Joan Mellen, ed., The World of Luis Buñuel: Essays in Criticism (New York: Oxford, 1978), p. 153.

[67] Salvador Dalí, La vie secrète (Paris: Gallimard, 1952), pp. 256-8; Luis Buñuel, My Last Sigh, trans. A. Israel (New York: Knopf, 1983), p. 15.

It has even been argued that, by extension, all intercourse is necessarily violent even in cases where there is no perceived castration threat.[70] André Masson's Naissance de la femme (Birth of Woman, 1943) is a crude, almost pornographic drawing of a man directing an absurdly sized phallus into what appears to be the bleeding sex of a woman with her legs in the air.[71] The title, taken from a text on the drawing--"the lamp smokes/heads come off/the phallus shines/a woman is born"--suggests that a woman is only "born"--dare we say "borne"?--when she loses her virginity. And since both figures' heads seem to come off--the male's quite clearly, the female's separated from her shoulders by a line--headlessness is also a sign of the loss of reason, not just castration. In any case, the joke is that sex always leads to mutilation, even without a car accident. Certainly this is also the implication of an engraving by Hans Bellmer which explicitly associates a female eye and vagina (fig. 8). Penetration of this orifice would, of course, result in enucleation. The engraving was made in 1944 to illustrate Georges Bataille's _Histoire de l'oeil_, first published in 1928 and thus exactly contemporary with _Un chien andalou_. Many have tried to rescue both Bellmer and Bataille from charges of mere pornography, chiefly by explaining both as highly sober linguistic play.[72] However, no-one has succeeded in proving that this wordplay is amusing.

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[68] Ibid., p. 105. Note also that Dalí claimed to have read Freud when still a student and implied that he read certain Freudian texts well before the other Surrealists: La vie secrète, pp. 245, 249, 252. The English edition, The Secret Life of Salvador Dalí, trans. H. Chevalier (New York: Dial, 1961), p. 167, note 1, asserts that he had read Freud by 1926.

[69] For the male symbols, see Freud's Introductory Lectures, S.E., XV, p. 154, which lists daggers, knives, and sabres. For a discussion of the female symbols, see Waldemar Deonna; Le Symbolisme de l'oeil (Paris: Boccard, 1965), pp. 68, 148, 153, and so on.

[70] Jeanne Siegel, "The image of the eye in Surrealist art and its psychoanalytic sources, part I: the Mythic Eye," Arts, LVI, no. 6 (February 1982), pp. 102-6. Cf. Andrea Dworkin's controversial Intercourse (New York: Macmillan, 1987).

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[71] Reproduced in Carmine Benincasa, _Dalla bestemmia all'invocazione: il cammino di André Masson_ (Parma: Università di Parma, Centro studi e archivio della communicazione, 1981), cat. no. 55.

[72] See, for example, Roland Barthes, "The Metaphor of the Eye," trans. J. A. Underwood, in Georges Bataille, _The Story of the Eye_, trans. J. Neugroschel (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1982), pp. 119-27; and Michel Camus, "Les avatars de l'oeil chez Bellmer," in _Obliques, numéro spécial: Hans Bellmer_ (Paris: Borderie, 1979), pp. 199-211.

c) Rereading Freud and Reading re Freud

There is no dispute that certain of Freud's ideas provided inspiration for technical innovations in the hands of the Surrealists. To the jokework described above one could add the recitation of dreams, free association (provided that one understand how Surrealist eclecticism diverts automatism from Freud's therapeutic process), condensation (the collage-like fusion of unrelated materials in dreams and neuroses), and obsessional staring (which Freud linked to the famous Leonardo da Vinci story about the fantastic images to be found hidden in the marks on the old walls).[73] It is equally true that certain general themes in Freud's works were of great influence, though they were often characteristically twisted. Freud's Totem and Taboo, with which we began this chapter, is a case in point. Part of the study attempts to link certain primitive behaviours with presumably atavistic tendencies in civilized madmen. Such a theme was of great interest to all of the intelligentsia of the irrational, transcending even such boundaries of decorum as those which existed between Breton and Bataille.[74] Breton, on the one hand, acknowledged "the affinities of Surrealist thought and that of the

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[73] See Freud, Leonardo da Vinci and a Memory of His Childhood (1910), S.E., XI; Ernst, Beyond Painting, pp. 4-7; André Masson, "Propos sur le surréalisme," in Le Rebelle, p. 37; Breton, "Le Message automatique," p. 56; and so on.

[74] For an explanation of these boundaries, see parts b) and e) of chapters II and III, respectively.

Indians," while on the other he claimed that he could spend his "whole life prying loose the secrets of the insane."[75] Bataille went even further, linking certain primitive rites, self-mutilation, and madness.[76] Of course, Freud saw the commonalities as negative symptoms, whereas Breton and Bataille saw redeeming factors of considerably different orders in insanity and primitiveness. A similar situation obtained in the case of Freud's reading of a minor novella by Wilhelm Jensen, Gradiva. As Whitney Chadwick and others have pointed out, the Surrealists were happy to exploit the new meanings which Freud brought to the late Gothic tale about Norbert Hanold, an archeologist obsessed with an ancient relief, and a forgotten woman from his youth, Zoë Bertgang, whose love transcends and cures his mental instability.[77] The theme is fairly simple: the apparently miraculous development of love as an aftereffect of an intimate association in childhood. Importantly, the postscript to the second edition (1912)--the one most likely read by Max Ernst in 1913--made it clear that this childhood love was like that between brothers and sisters. Ernst most likely added this to his own growing psychological myth, creating a complicated web of fashionable traumas, as in Deux soeurs and La Femme 100 Têtes.[78] The other Surrealists were more content simply to illustrate the features of the narrative--chiefly the female figure on Hanold's relief, Gradiva, the striding one--because they were understood to resonate with Freudian meaning, even when not precisely articulated.[79]

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[75] The first quotation is from the Entretiens, p. 248. The second is from the "Manifesto," p. 5.

[76] Georges Bataille, "Sacrificial Mutilation and the Severed Ear of Vincent Van Gogh," in his Visions of Excess: Selected Writings, 1927-1939, ed. A. Stoekl (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1985), pp. 61-72. The text was originally in Documents, no. 8, second year (1930), pp. 10-20.

[77] Whitney Chadwick, "Masson's Gradiva: the Metamorphosis of a Surrealist Myth," Art Bulletin, LII, no. 4 (December 1970), pp. 415-22. See also Spector, pp. 156-8.

It is already clear that the most common of all Freudian meanings regarding women is that they generate castration anxiety. It is not surprising, therefore, that the Freudian fashion of rereading and reinterpreting imaginative works of the past should directly influence Surrealist practice. The effects of this influence were most marked in the 1930s, when Dalí, for one, was already interested in developing new interpretive strategies like his paranoiac-critical method.[80] At the same moment, Surrealist interest in praying mantises, renowned for devouring their mates after and sometimes even during the sex act, was at its height for the same reason--women are castrating beasts.[81] Some of the Surrealists even kept mantises in their homes, as if to remind themselves of an ever-present danger in their own relationships with women. They all failed to take into account that the behaviour of the female mantis is quite different when the animal is not in captivity. In fact, recent entomological research has indicated that her famous, voracious sexual attacks never occur in the wild.[82] Surrealists can be excused for their ignorance of later scientific research, of course, but the tenacity with which they held onto the mantis theme shows them in a very poor light nonetheless. They fused it with the nineteenth-century's popular expression of the *femme fatale*, the archetypal, one dimensional Eve who was solely responsible for man's fall from grace.[83] It was Woman's "natural" role to be evil.

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[78] See Werner Spies, Max Ernst, 1950-1970: The Return of La Belle Jardinière, trans. R. Allen (New York: Abrams, 1972), pp. 38, 40, 48, 53.

[79] Chadwick, "Masson's Gradiva," reviews a selection of Gradiva images. Her date of 1930 for the Dalí examples (p. 417) is probably incorrect, for the French translation of Freud's Delusions and Dreams in Jensen's "Gradiva" (1907) was not available until 1931.

[80] Very simply, this is Dalí's famous double-image practice. See Haim N. Finkelstein, "Dalí's paranoia-criticism, or the exercise of freedom," Twentieth-century literature, XXI, no. 1 (February 1975), pp. 59-71.

The Surrealists were adept at reinventing the iconography of Woman by fusing bits of Freudianism and other fashions with their own investigations of their poetic precursors. Max Ernst's Fêtes de la faim (Hunger feast[84], fig. 9) of 1935, for example, was partly composed by chance procedures, frottage, and dropped bits of string. Within the arbitrary forms thus created, the artist found and isolated the forms of a spindly-legged mantis looming forward and gesticulating wildly over a bird-like form lying in the foreground of a half-formed forest. The vertical insect dominates the oval picture space, while the erratic diagonals which compose its figure suggest a feeding frenzy consistent with the title. In contrast, the horizontally disposed bird is a static, lifeless corpse resting at the edge of the oval, as if it had been dragged to the edge of nature, as it were, in its death struggle. The puffed breast and swollen belly of the mantis suggest a pregnant female. If coitus has therefore taken place, then we should not be surprised that the mantis has attacked her mate. Moreover, her mate is a bird, a traditional symbol of flight and freedom, as well as Ernst's presumed alter-ego, Loplop, the Superior of the Birds. Thus, a plausible interpretation of the image is that women, like mantises, are unfeeling creatures who seduce and destroy men, returning them to the nature from which they seek to escape. Ernst's pictorial synthesis completely revised a poem by the oft-cited Surrealist predecessor Arthur Rimbaud, the title of which is also "Fêtes de la faim." Whereas Ernst invented a femme-fatale, Rimbaud had described a desire on the part of the author to devour everything about him in an attempt to extinguish the self through immersion in nature.[85] On the one hand, then, the painting constitutes a creative misreading of the poem; on the other, it welds certain later cultural fashions to earlier ones. As fascinating as this re-invention is, more intriguing still is Ernst's interest in the tales of Edgar Allan Poe, especially as they were interpreted in 1933 by a disciple of Freud, Marie Bonaparte.

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[81] A thorough discussion is William L. Pressly, "The Praying Mantis in Surrealist Art," *Art Bulletin*, LV, no. 4 (December 1973), pp. 600-615.

[82] Ibid., p. 600, note 1. See also the anonymous note entitled "Sex Among the Mantises," *Discover*, VI, no. 1 (January 1985), p. 9.

[83] The bibliography on this topic is overwhelming. See Robert Pincus-Witten, "The Iconography of Symbolist Painting," *Artforum*, VIII, no. 5 (January 1970), pp. 56-62; and Bram Dijkstra, *Idols of Perversity: Fantasies of Feminine Evil in Fin-de-siècle Culture* (New York: Oxford, 1986). For the role of the type in Surrealism, see Gauthier, pp. 180-2.

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[84] The title is sometimes given in English as Celebration of Hunger. See, for example, Diane Waldman, Max Ernst: a Retrospective (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1975), cat. no. 171.

The American writer Edgar Allan Poe published one of his stranger tales, "Berenice," in the Southern Literary Messenger in 1835. It is a variation on the graveyard genre of Romantic literature which appealed so much to the Surrealists that André Breton lionized its practitioners in his "Manifesto": "Poe is Surrealist in adventure," he wrote, while "Young's Nights are Surrealist from one end to the other."[86] The elements of "Berenice" are quite simple:

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[85] Edward J. Ahearn, Arthur Rimbaud: Visions and Habitations (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983), pp. 278-9. It has also been interpreted as a cry of plaintive childishness by John P. Houston, The Design of Rimbaud's Poetry (New Haven: Yale, 1963), p. 127. The poem itself is translated as "The Triumph of Hunger," in Arthur Rimbaud: Complete Works, trans. P. Schmidt (New York: Harper and Row, 1967), pp. 152-3.

[86] "Manifesto," pp. 26-7. "Young's Nights" is an allusion to Edward Young's The Complaint, or Night Thoughts on Life, Death, and Immortality (1742-45), a classic of the graveyard genre.

the narrator, a ruminative and unhealthy young man named Egaeus, is given to long periods of obsessional staring at objects of little significance in themselves. As the story proceeds, he becomes increasingly distracted, describing his ailment as a "morbid irritability of those properties of the mind in metaphysical science termed the attentive."[87] For years Egaeus was indifferent to his cousin Berenice, but he becomes completely infatuated with her when she falls ill with consumptive epilepsy. Eventually, he proposes marriage. As the wedding day approaches, in spite of Berenice's increasing illness, Egaeus sits in his crepuscular study, turning her image over and over in his mind. While he is in this distracted state, Berenice enters the room in an ambulatory trance. The narrator looks at her, noting even in the dimness of his study the deterioration of her features and the change in her hair colour. As he does so, Berenice pulls her lips back in a ghastly grimace, revealing perfectly pure, white teeth. She soon leaves, but the image of her teeth haunts her suitor. He becomes so delerious that he slips into an ambulatory trance of his own, and when Berenice is reported dead he goes to her chambers and violently tears the teeth from her head. Only later does he recover a sufficient degree of normal consciousness to understand what he has done, as well as the horrific fact that Berenice was not really dead at all, but just in a particularly deep trance.

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[87] Edgar Allan Poe, "Berenice," in The Annotated Tales of Edgar Allan Poe, ed. S. Peithman (Garden City: Doubleday, 1981), p. 33.

Max Ernst painted his little-known Berenice in 1935 (fig. 10), but he never explained what attracted him to the macabre tale. He seems, however, to have been drawn to the personality of the narrator, whose description of his obsessional staring provided a direct model for Ernst's discussion of his automatic methods in Beyond Painting. Describing the process of frottage, the artist tried to find a true equivalent for the automatic writing of the poets,[88] attending the birth of his work like a spectator, outlining and projecting "what is visible within him."[89] Frottage, he continued, was based "on nothing other than the intensification of the irritability of the mind's faculties by appropriate technical means." In the original French text, this phrase was taken directly from Baudelaire's translation of Poe's "Berenice," dropping only the word "morbid."[90]

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[88] This was because the concept of automatic drawing created too many problems, especially with regard to the rejected notion of talent. Various stages of the debate can be seen in Breton's "Manifesto", p. 21, note; Max Morise, "Les yeux enchantés," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1 (December 1924), pp. 26-7; Pierre Naville, "Beaux-arts," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 3 (15 April 1925), pp. 26-7; and, of course, the many essays gathered in Breton's Le Surrealisme et la peinture, rev. ed. (Paris: Gallimard, 1965).

[89] The italics are Ernst's, Beyond Painting, p. 8.

[90] Whereas Poe has Egaeus describe his distractions as a function of "une irritabilité morbide des facultés de l'esprit," Ernst writes only "L'irritabilité des facultés de l'esprit." See the Baudelaire translation of "Bérénice" (originally Paris: Michel Lévy, 1857) in Nouvelles Histoire Extraordinaires, vol. II (Paris: Grund, 1941), p. 75. Both Carrouges, p. 81, and Spies, Loplop, p. 89, have drawn attention to the similar phraseology. Neither has drawn any conclusions.

This is not mere coincidence, for they were speaking essentially of the same propensity for trance that characterizes the generation of obsessions and hypnagogic visions. Moreover, the Poe text explicitly described the ailment--clearly not considered as such by Ernst--as monomania, an old psychological term for what now is called paranoia. With precisely this in mind, Ernst went on to criticize Dalí's method of paranoiac-criticism as "employed in a sense which does not correspond to its medical meaning" --that is, as it was genuinely found in Poe's story and in Ernst's frottages. He explicitly claimed precedence over Dalí, then, but he based himself on a literary model of a century earlier. However, Ernst is not to be condemned for his paraphrase of Poe, for his identification with Egaeus was sincere and authentic. In fact, Breton described the German artist as "the most magnificently haunted brain of our day,"[91] an epithet equally applicable to the profoundly disturbed Egaeus as he made his way to his horrible rendezvous with Berenice.

As might be expected, Ernst's Berenice is not merely an illustration of a component of the tale. In fact, it seems like a reversal of the narrative, for the figure of Berenice, with her long hair cascading over one shoulder,[92] seems to loom over a rather helpless male figure that may or may not be lying in a box or coffin. In this, she is like the contemporary female mantis of Hunger Feast, triumphing over the male in spite of the original tale's apparently opposite conclusion. Part of the origin of this change is thus to be found in the same distorted prejudices concerning human sexuality that characterized the mantis theme--that is, that women are fundamentally evil. Moreover, Berenice's character is also presumed to be "natural," for she too blends with her environment in colour and loose treatment.

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[91] See the foreword to La Femme 100 Têtes, p. 10.

One may well ask why an artist with pretensions to intellectual and sociocultural progress would adhere to such outdated concepts. The simplest answer is to point to Ernst's climate of ideas and particularly to Marie Bonaparte's psychoanalytic study of The Life and Works of Edgar Allan Poe.[93] Previously known for translations into French of Freud's studies of Leonardo and Jensen's Gradiva--both quite familiar to the Surrealists--Bonaparte published her lengthy analysis of Poe in 1933. A contemporary reviewer immediately named it the best study of Poe anywhere,[94] and the Surrealists evidently discussed it in the cafés for some time.[95] Ernst seems to have responded to Bonaparte's very particular interpretation of the story "Berenice" as illustrative of Poe's fear of the *vagina dentata*, the toothed vagina.[96] That the same fear of being castrated or devoured underlies the mantis imagery allows us to draw two conclusions. First, Ernst's reversal of the implication of Poe's tale represents an attempt to correct it, so to speak, according to his understanding of psychoanalytic theory. In other words, the painting is not an illustration of the story but Ernst's projection of what was "visible within him." Whereas Egaeus acted out his obsession to its final conclusion, Ernst has only projected his presumptions of the character of the woman herself. His automatic techniques were harnessed to expose "unexpectedly precise images whose nature probably reveals the initial cause of the obsession or a semblance of that cause."[97] His Berenice is therefore not the victim but the victor, evil cause of the vengeance enacted by Egaeus.

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[92] The Annotated Tales of Edgar Allan Poe, p. 31 notes that Poe's concentration on the hair of Berenice links her to the historical Berenice whose hair was said to form the seven stars, near the constellation of Leo, called Coma Berenices.

[93] Marie Bonaparte, Edgar Poe, étude psychoanalytique, 2 vols. (Paris: Denoël et Steele, 1933). My references are to the single-volume English translation, The Life and Works of Edgar Allan Poe: A Psycho-analytic Interpretation, trans. J. Rodker (London: Imago, 1949).

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[94] Edmond Jaloux, review of Bonaparte on Poe, *Nouvelles littéraires* (23 September 1933), p. 3. See also the discussion in Patrick F. Quinn, *The French Face of Edgar Poe* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1957), p. 20.

[95] Personal communication of Patrick Waldberg, Paris, 5 November 1984. See also Dalí, *Secret Life*, p. 23.

[96] Bonaparte, p. 218.

[97] Ernst, *Beyond Painting*, p. 8.

The second conclusion is that Ernst and Bonaparte were merely responding to intellectual fashion. Recent feminist research has indicated that one of the tenets of classical psychoanalysis, castration anxiety, is questionable in the formation of gender identity. For example, Barbara Walker maintains that castration anxiety is a patriarchal corruption of earlier myths equating earth with womb.[98] As patriarchal societies grew, the significance of the female principle, earth, as source of life was gradually replaced by the exclusive fertilizing power of the male principle, rain or semen. The mouth of the earth was left to represent only the grave, while the mouth of the womb, the vagina, took on a similar deathly symbolism. Both were perceived as insatiable devourers of men. Now, orthodox psychoanalysis has it that males unconsciously perceive sex as dying and orgasm as a little death, chiefly because of the castrated and castrating woman. Myth analysis refutes this, asserting that the origins of male anxiety are really much closer to an unwillingness to cede one's concrete individuality to the yawning intangibility of death.[99] Before the nineteenth century, both men and women could experience such anxiety. By the era of Freud, however, women lost their right to the emotion, as it were, because they were then understood as conspiring with nature against men. Ernst's Berenice adheres in all respects to an intellectual fashion which does not escape its nineteenth-century bourgeois roots. Instead, it continues to suppress the real cultural autonomy of women in favour of a femininity limited by patriarchal interests to the presumed natural stereotype of women as the downfall of men.

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[98] Barbara G. Walker, "Castration," in her Woman's Encyclopedia of Myths and Secrets (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1983), pp. 142-7.

[99] Wolfgang Lederer, The Fear of Women (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968), p. 126, represents the orthodox position. It is challenged in Barbara Walker, "Vagina Dentata," in her Woman's Encyclopedia, pp. 1034-7.

In view of the foregoing observations, one might suppose that it is much to the credit of René Magritte, another of the Surrealist artists strongly interested in Poe's tales, that he refused to adhere to Freudianism. He was, in fact, vehemently opposed to any sort of psychological, interpretive exercise, and his writings offer numerous instances of this rejection.[100] But Magritte's Plaisir (Pleasure, fig. 11) of 1926 shows a woman complacently chewing a bloody bird, a female devourer no less stereotyped than that of Ernst. Nor, for that matter, does the implication of the image change when we are told that it was inspired by the sight of Magritte's wife eating a chocolate bird.[101] Even this relatively explicit symbolism was denied by Magritte, however, for he saw any attempt to read what lies behind an image as misguided.

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[100] Almost all of the articles listed under the rubric "Psychanalyse" in the thematic index of Magritte's Ecrits complets, p. 754, demonstrate this point. Suzi Gablik, Magritte (London: Thames and Hudson, 1970), p. 11, quotes the artist to this effect: "To equate my painting with symbolism, conscious or unconscious, is to ignore its true nature."

[101] Louis Scutenaire, Magritte (Anvers: De Sikkel, 1948), p. 9.

This willful turning away, this uncritical acceptance of the surface alone, this closing of the eyes to a particular problem which is as much social as artistic, is nowhere so explicit as in a photographic group portrait of the Surrealists arranged around a Magritte painting of a nude woman (1929, fig. 12). The work effectively contradicts Magritte's assertions that images do not function as signifiers or symbols, for it is clear that the nude functions as a word. Like an element in a rebus, she contributes to the meaning of the painting's inscription to the extent of altering the adjective cachée: "I do not see the woman hidden in the forest."[102] This woman is a creature of nature, hidden from view by the closed eyelids of her adorers, absorbed by a forest environment that denies her any cultural identity. When women are not immersed in nature, when they break into culture, they must become (or must be made) masculine, less sexually threatening. It is for this reason that Sarah Kofman, a feminist critic of Freud, writes that men refuse to look upon women in order to avoid acknowledging their sexual difference.[103] To be in culture, a woman's body must be defamiliarized, masculinized, rendered less alien to males by simply being manipulated to resemble a penis. Going further even than Ernst did in "Open your bag, my good man," Magritte has painted his woman in a forest in an ironic mode. He excludes all visual allusions to a forest, instead forcing his nude into as cylindrical a form as possible. Importantly, he later used the same pose when he substituted a woman for the penis of a reclining river-god in L'Océan (The Ocean, 1943; see chapter III, fig. 59). It is clear, then, that in spite of the artist's denunciation of Freudianism and other symbolisms, Magritte's works do yield to iconographical analysis. One is permitted to ask why this might be the case. The answer is by no means certain, but intimations of it may be found by turning once again to Bonaparte's study of Poe.

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[102] Hal Foster mistranslates this as "I do not see the hiding-place in the forest." See his "L'Amour faux," Art in America, LXXIV, no. 1 (January 1986), p. 121. On signifiers in Surrealism in general, see Gérard Durozoi, "Notes sur la métaphore poétique et la métaphore picturale dans le surréalisme," Cahiers du 20e siècle, no. 4 (1975), pp. 115-16.

Magritte's lifelong love of Poe's tales is well-documented, and he considered a visit he made to Poe's home in the mid-1960's among the high points of his life.[104] He considered the writer a kindred spirit, someone with whom he was entirely in agreement. In view of this, it would not be surprising to find Magritte reject Bonaparte's assessment,[105] for she described Poe as an overly sensitive individual with a markedly Oedipal infatuation with his mother. The writer's mother had died when he was very young, around two years of age, and Bonaparte saw his subsequent career as a series of variations on this single theme, a desire to achieve reunion with the loved one in death. She described Poe as an infant mourning the diseased corpse of his mother, a relationship which she saw as sadistic and necrophilic, as in the case of "Berenice." Egaeus's cousin Berenice was presumed to be a substitute for Poe's real cousin Virginia, whom the writer married the year the story was published. According to Bonaparte, both Berenice and Virginia, who was only thirteen at the time of the marriage, were assimilated as images of the lost mother. Poe's dim childhood memory of his consumptive mother provided an unconscious source for the gaunt cheeks, glassy eyes and exposed teeth of Berenice, while the violent removal of the latter was supposed to be a "retributive castration inflicted on the mother whom he loves, and yet hates, because [of] his sex-love for her in infancy."[106]

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[103] Sarah Kofman, L'Enigme de la femme: la femme dans les textes de Freud (Paris: Galilée, 1980), p. 403.

[104] See René Magritte, "Interview Marcel Fryns II," and "Interview Claude Vial," in his Ecrits complets, p. 619 and p. 642 respectively.

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[105] Magritte does not refer specifically to Bonaparte, but in a letter to André Bosmans of 2 March 1964 he criticizes Jean-Paul Sartre's study of Baudelaire (Paris: Gallimard, 1947) because the philosopher was "incapable de penser que Baudelaire pouvait aimer les contes de Poe uniquement parce qu'ils sont admirables: il explique l'intéret de Baudelaire pour Poe par les motifs chers aux psychanalystes. Il n'a même pas le mérite d'avoir trouvé lui-même ce genre d'explication [my stress]." The letter is quoted in Ecrits complets, p. 414.

[106] Bonaparte, p. 218.

Importantly, Magritte never painted this subject directly, although he alluded to many of Poe's tales through titles like the Domain of Arnheim.[107] This alone suggests a repression of the kind of memories Bonaparte wished to disclose, an impression which is all the more compelling when one notes that Magritte's childhood was said to be strikingly like Poe's in one respect. The Belgian painter's mother committed suicide in 1912, when he was 14 years old. He was present when searchers withdrew her nude body from the Sambre river, her nightgown wrapped about her face. The story, which is repeated in virtually every lengthy publication on Magritte, was first told by the painter's friend Louis Scutenaire as if it had occurred with the crystalline clarity of a dream.[108] Recently, however Magritte's widow Georgette confirmed that her husband did not learn of the nightgown until many years later,[109] so it may be that the story was consciously exploited for its traumatic resonance. In either case, the biographical tidbit has been used to explain Magritte's curious compositions with shrouds or veils over the figures' heads, like Les Amants (The Lovers, 1928) or L'Histoire centrale (The Heart of the matter, 1934).[110] Le Viol (The Rape, 1934, fig. 13) twists the story by substituting for his mother's obscured face her visibly nude body. Even the routine composition, dispassionate brushwork, and deadpan colouring suggest that the artist was repressing any emotional involvement with the subject. It is important to recall, however, that Magritte was profoundly irritated by such interpretation, and if one had asked him whether his La Gacheuse (The Depredator, 1935; fig. 14) were not a synthesis of his own trauma and the hideously grinning Berenice, the predatory woman, his answer would undoubtably have been to this effect: "An image which evokes Mystery evokes that which asks no questions and satisfies no curiosity."[111] The painter's reluctance to discuss the subject may simply have been due to his uncritical nature and his willful acceptance of the image alone--that is, the signifier without the signified, the code without the message. On the other hand, it may be that he was trying to repress a traumatic incident, as evidenced by his refusal to speak of his mother's death to Georgette, his wife for forty-five years. One psychoanalyst has gone so far as to speculate that this was essentially because Georgette, whom Magritte first met a year after his mother's death, was a substitute for her. This would also explain why Magritte considered the best part of any voyage to be the moment of returning home, where he would find Georgette waiting.[112] Whereas Ernst knowingly, though automatically, reinterpreted Poe through contemporary intellectual modes, Magritte pretended to reject the fashion, preferring to identify directly with the writer and with his poetic principles. In fact, Poe's tales and theoretical texts occupy equal amounts of the painter's collected writings, and the theory appears to have been potentially more important. Poe advocated a reaction against any sort of moral didacticism, preferring "visionary magic, suggestive strangeness, brevity, and immediate emotional impact."[113] Poetry was written for its own sake, not as an illustration of a theme or symbol, a sentiment which Magritte echoed in his "L'Art de la ressemblance,"[114] yet another argument against interpretation.

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[107] Curiously, the correspondence of picture-title-story is never direct, but certain relationships can be established. Pictures with Poe titles include The Imp of the Perverse, The Domain of Arnheim, The Haunted Castle, Scheherezade and Metzengerstein. The painting entitled Not to be Reproduced includes on a mantlepiece a copy of Poe's Narrative of Arthur Gordon Pym. Paintings which may allude to Poe's themes in a more poetically effusive way are The Frontiers of Summer (the building blocks of the sky reflect the harmoniously ordered universe of Poe's "Eureka") and The Double Secret (where the recurring motif of bells recalls Poe's onomatopoeic exercise "the Bells"). And, of course, Ravens appear frequently. Most of these are reproduced in Gablik, passim.

[108] Scutenaire, p. 5.

[109] Barbara Stoeltie, "After Magritte," The World of Interiors (April 1986), p. 149. Magritte's own "Esquisse autobiographique," Ecrits complets, p. 366, corroborates this in its reticence on the subject.

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[110] Reproduced in Gablik, figs. 44, 46.

[111] Magritte, "A propos de l'univers du son," Ecrits complets, p. 504.

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[112] René Held, L'oeil du psychanalyste: surréalisme et surréalité (Paris: Payot, 1973), pp. 283-4, 291. Milton Viederman, "René Magritte: Coping with Loss-Reality and Illusion," Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association, XXXV, no. 4 (1987), pp. 967-98, is strikingly similar. Neither analyst questions the veracity of the biographical evidence. Dr. Viederman's paper was brought to my attention by Deborah Brown.

[113] Walter Jackson Bate, ed., Criticism: the Major Texts (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1952), p. 351.

[114] Ecrits complets, pp. 655-7.

Most interestingly, Magritte agreed in his "Variantes de la tristesse" with the spirit of Poe's "Philosophy of Composition," which maintains that if melancholy is the most legitimate poetical tone, the most poetically beautiful subjects will be those which generate the most melancholy. In this context, therefore, Magritte would have agreed with Poe's strikingly misogynistic phrase: "The death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world."[115] This suggests that lying behind Magritte's images of women is the stereotypical opposite of the *femme fatale*, the suffering innocent or the hapless victim. His most famous work, *L'Assassin menacé* (The Threatened Assassin, 1926; chapter III, fig. 69), includes a reclining nude with blood flowing from her lips, her neck possibly broken beneath a strip of cloth. It is certainly a gratuitous similarity, but it is interesting that Marie Bonaparte's later book on *Female Sexuality* also propounds the nineteenth-century notion of inherent female masochism, a psychological bias that has only very recently been challenged.[116] If nothing else, the similarity points out the common roots in the previous century of Freud's and Magritte's unconscious attitudes towards women, roots which were continuing to recoil from the impact of early feminist manifestations. In this context, Freud's concept of penis envy--which Bonaparte wholeheartedly endorsed and of which Magritte's L'Amour (Love, c.1946-7; chapter III, fig. 56) seems to be an accidental illustration--is itself a patriarchal myth designed to put women in their place. Too severe a case of this envy makes a woman a medical hysteric, a patient or a criminal to be manipulated and controlled.[117] In a nutshell, man gives woman a definition.

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[115] Magritte, "Variantes de la tristesse," *Ecrits complets*, pp. 410-12; Edgar Allan Poe, "The Philosophy of Composition," in *The Works of Edgar Allan Poe: VI, Literary Criticism*, eds. E. C. Stedman and G. E. Woodberry (New York: Scribner's, 1927), p. 39.

Edgar Allan Poe's influence on Baudelaire's poetic theory has long been known, while that on Surrealism is less familiar.[118] For the Surrealists, it was a matter of introducing un frisson nouveau--a new shudder, shiver, thrill--to an exacerbated, fundamentally Romantic sensibility which needed elements of corruption. Whether they knowingly adhered to current intellectual fashion, like Ernst, or willfully and naively embodied the trappings of Poe's personality and aesthetic, like Magritte, they all acknowledged that the dark side of life was often filled with delicious horrors. It is to be all the more regretted that the search for the ever-new, ever-more-titillating thrill so often embraced obsolete stereotypes of woman as vampire or victim, for both of these stereotypes were--and unfortunately still are--the cultural property of men.

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[116] Bonaparte read a paper on "Passivity, Masochism, and Femininity" in 1933, which eventually became Feminine Sexuality, trans. J. Rodker (New York: International Universities Press, 1953). The conception of the masochist female was endemic to French intellectuals. Jules Michelet, whose L'Amour (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1848) was known to most Surrealists, described women as the "eternally wounded." For a current refutation, see Paula Caplan, The Myth of Women's Masochism (New York: Dutton, 1985).

[117] Kofman, pp. 97-106.

[118] For Baudelaire, see Léon Lemonnier, Les Traducteurs d'Edgar Poe en France de 1845 à 1875: Charles Baudelaire (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1928). For the Surrealists, the only study of depth is Claude Richard, "André Breton et Edgar Poe," La Nouvelle revue française (1 April 1967), pp. 926-36. My own "Edgar Allan Poe and the Surrealists' Image of Women," Woman's Art Journal, VIII, no. 1 (Spring/summer 1987), pp. 8-12, is a condensed version of the above, incorporating helpful suggestions made by Elsa Honig Fine.

"Cultural property" is a loaded term, implying something fixed, unchanging, worthy of being passed on in the form of "influences" from generation to generation. Ironically, the material being relayed in this way was inescapably coloured by intellectual fashions and by the misapprehensions of those temporal conventions. One of the more current fashions in literary criticism today addresses itself quite directly to this issue. Fortunately, it does so in such a way as to recapitulate what has been said in this chapter concerning the rereading(s) of Freud. Harold Bloom caused something of a stir in literary circles in 1973 when he revised the very notion of "influence" in decidedly Oedipal terms. Simply put, Bloom argued that poetic influence has never been the mere assimilation of the style or content of a predecessor's work; instead, it is an ambivalent love-hate relationship like that between father and (hypothetically Oedipal) son. A poet is influenced both by his admiration for the "father-poet" and by his envy and fear of him and his works. The anxiety that these ambivalent feelings generate compels the poet to distort the meaning of the predecessor's works in an attempt to incorporate their greatness into his own poem while still maintaining his own sense of autonomy. This recalls Freud's primal totemic banquet, with its attendant taboos. In effect, any poet "cannibalizes"--misreads or misinterprets--those works which are of greatest influence upon him. The various processes by which the poet revises his predecessor's works are, like taboos, prelogical prohibitions. To explain them, Bloom based them in part on Freud's defense mechanisms, which include such things as identification, projection, rationalization, regression, and so on. Bloom called his thesis The Anxiety of Influence, and it has already compelled at least one student of literary Surrealism to begin study of the extent to which Breton and others misread their forefathers.[119]

One of the implications of Bloom's theory is that literary critics must learn to practice what he called "antithetical criticism"--that is, a deliberate misinterpretation or misprision of the material under discussion.

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[119] Harold Bloom, The Anxiety of Influence (New York: Oxford, 1973); see also Jeanine Parisier Plottel, "Surrealist Archives of Anxiety," Yale French Studies, LXVI (1984), pp. 121-36.

In a way, the Surrealists advocated this forty years earlier, when they approved of certain aspects of the work of Giorgio de Chirico and disapproved of others.[120] Moreover, their readings of de Chirico's paintings were, like Bloom's antithetical criticism, not just theoretically-based interpretations but also a form of modernist creativity. When eleven Surrealists answered questions concerning de Chirico's L'Enigme d'une journée (The Enigma of a Day, 1914), precious few of them offered anything but a type of parallel poetic activity, usually concerning things not actually seen at all.[121] It is no accident that this activity in general is similar to the current literary fashion called "reader-response" criticism, which turns attention away from works of art as completed structures of determinable meaning towards the shifting responses of a succession of readers--or, to allow ourselves to be "influenced" by Bloom, a succession of misreaders.[122] This allows us to draw a further conclusion regarding the influence of Edgar Allan Poe: whereas Magritte was chiefly concerned with misreading the American writer alone, Ernst intended to misread Bonaparte's misreading of Poe, which in turn was patterned after Freud's misprisions. It is really less complicated than it seems, for it means only that certain sets of readers--for example, the Surrealists in general, with Ernst and Magritte as sub-sets--assume practices and relationships between themselves and their predecessors, as well as between the act and the object of analysis.[123] As a result, simplistic observations that the Surrealists misunderstood psychoanalysis, however much they may have benefitted,[124] are undermined and replaced with an extended definition of collage: anything phenomenal can be torn from its original context and repositioned to generate new meaning. The irony is that one of the prime subjects of this Surrealist "meta-collage" is the same distorted understanding of Woman that obtained in more conspicuously anti-female times. She has just been given a new wardrobe.

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[120] See Laura Rosenstock, "De Chirico's Influence on the Surrealists," in William Rubin, ed., De Chirico (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1982), pp. 111-129.

[121] "Sur les possibilités irrationnelles de pénétration et d'orientation dans un tableau Georgio [sic] de Chirico: L'Enigme d'une journée (11 février 1933)," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 6 (15 May 1933), pp. 13-16.

[122] Reader-response criticism is not a single theory but a group of related tendencies. For an introduction, see Jane P. Tompkins, ed., Reader-Response Criticism: from formalism to post-structuralism (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1980).

d) Hysteria and Other Mental Illnesses.

The prime example of a Surrealist meta-collage of Woman was signalled by an article of 1928 entitled "Le cinquantenaire de l'hystérie" (the fiftieth anniversary of hysteria). The authors of this editorial, Breton and Louis Aragon, lamented that hysteria, "the greatest poetic discovery of the late nineteenth century,"[125] was being redefined as pithiatism, a mere symptom of mental illness which could be eliminated by suggestion alone. The authors borrowed in part from the studies of Dr. Jean-Martin Charcot, whose studies of hysterics provided photographs of "Les attitudes passionelles en 1878" (Sexual positions of 1878; fig. 15). Before Charcot's era, it was generally agreed that hysteria was peculiar to women. Indeed, the word itself derives from hysterikos, the Greek "womb." Around the time of the Renaissance, people believed that hysteria was caused by the accidental detachment of the womb from the inner wall of the abdomen, whereupon it would wander about in the body, causing uncontrollable behaviour. A simple equation was soon secured: wild conduct in women who had no children meant that their wombs were not anchored. To the medical establishment of Charcot's lifetime, this meant that any female expression of sexual interest or sexual activity outside of the reproductive drive was a symptom of madness. Sadly, there is no shortage of evidence that this chain of ideas led to the sexual mutilation, through clitoridectomies and cauterizations, of innumerable patients in the nineteenth century.[126]

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[123] This paraphrases Clive Bloom--not Harold Bloom (note 119)--*The "Occult" Experience and the New Criticism: Daemonism, Sexuality, and the Hidden in Literature* (Sussex: Harvester, 1986), p. x. Clive Bloom's exploration of the Bonaparte study of Poe is exemplary in this respect (pp. 27-55). It does not, however, mention the Surrealists.

[124] See, for example, Jean-Louis Houdebine, "Méconnaissance de la psychanalyse dans le discours surréaliste," *Tel Quel*, no. 46 (Summer 1971), pp. 67-82; and Dresden, pp. 128-9.

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[125] Louis Aragon and André Breton, "Le cinquantenaire de l'hystérie," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 11 (15 March 1928), p. 20.

As provocative as medical hysteria was, Aragon and Breton could not refrain from interpolating other phenomena, just as Breton had done with psychological automatism and that of Hélène Smith. To Charcot's photographs, then, the two poets collaged their impressions of an odd film entitled La Sorcellerie à travers les ages (Witchcraft through the ages, fig. 16). Produced in Sweden in 1920 under the title Häxan, the film has never been discussed in relation to the Surrealist apotheosis of hysteria.[127] A curious mixture of documentary and fantasy, La Sorcellerie begins with a survey of paintings of witches' sabbaths and the like. It then adopts a pedagogical tone, with a lecturer's pointer indicating various texts and artifacts having to do with witchcraft in the Middle Ages. Soon this dispassionate tone is replaced by a fantasy sequence in which a sorceress makes an aphrodisiac. Her client, a monk, imbibes the potion and promptly assaults a serving-girl nearby. A later sequence includes a sighing, evidently frustrated young bride who turns from her sleeping groom only to confront the Danish director, Benjamin Christensen, playing the role of a colossal, nude demon. Interestingly, Christensen also appears later as a psychiatrist! The most memorable parts of the film are the sabbath-scenes conjured up when an old woman confesses under torture. One soon sees all of the clichés of Satanism: broom-riders, orgiasts, eaters of toads and children, celebrants kissing the devil's fundament, and so on. Aragon and Breton would have understood all of this as a condemnation of bourgeois repression, of course, a conclusion which is inescapable given that some of the final scenes expressly link female hysterics of the modern age to women of the Middle Ages who believed themselves possessed by demons.[128]

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[126] Two recent books are full of such accounts: Elaine Showalter, The Female Malady (New York: Random House, 1986); and Jeffrey Masson and M. Loring, eds., A Dark Science: Women, Sexuality and Psychiatry in the 19th Century (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1986).

[127] Matthews, p. 109, mentions it (with an incorrect date) in passing, but only to point out Surrealist taste in films. Ado Kyrou, Amour, Erotisme, et cinéma (Paris: Terrain vague, 1957), p. 70, claims that it proves that the Catholic Church will never vanquish love! Two brief discussions of the film itself are Roger Boussinot, ed., "Häxan," L'Encyclopédie du cinéma (Paris: Bordas, 1967), p. 721; and Tanita C. Kelly, "Witchcraft through the Ages (Häxan)," in Frank N. Magill, ed., Magill's Survey of Cinema: Silent Films (Englewood Cliffs: Salem Press, 1982), vol. III, pp. 1257-1260.

The authors of "Le cinquantenaire de l'hystérie" fused hysteria and the occult in such a way as to extract a "poetic discovery" along with a revolutionary morality subverting bourgeois standards. The new alloy appears to be a benevolent one until the reader realizes that the authors condoned and even applauded the sexual abuse of long-suffering patients:

> [The] resident doctors at the Salpêtrière mixed up their professional duty with their taste for love [i.e., sex].... Later they patiently enumerated, for the

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[128] The link between hysteria and witchcraft was well established in the nineteenth century. See Masson and Loring, pp. 14, 176, notes 13-14.

> sake of the medical cause..., the so-called pathological sexual positions which were to them, and are still humanly to us, so precious.... Hysteria is a more or less irreducible mental state characterized by the subversion of the relations established between the subject and the moral world.... This mental state is based on the need of a reciprocal seduction.... Hysteria is not a pathological phenomenon and may in all respects be considered as a supreme means of expression.[129]

Most discussions of the article concentrate on only the last sentence, redeeming the poets' interest as a quest for new aesthetic forms, an alternative to bourgeois rationalism, or as a reference to Greek myths of ecstatic love.[130] Useful as they are, such interpretations overlook what is written between the lines. The patients supposedly reciprocate the attentions of their abusers, thus contributing to their own rapes. Moreover, because they take place outside the "moral world," the impassioned attacks are morally blameless, and the victims can then be subjected to the dispassionate scrutiny of the medical establishment. Both this excess and the more imaginative excesses of witchcraft are condoned because they proposed new models of behaviour operating outside of the repressive conventions of the bourgeoisie.

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[129] Aragon and Breton, "Le cinquantenaire," pp. 20-22.

[130] See, respectively, Chadwick, Women Artists, p. 35; Franklin Rosemont, "The 100th Anniversary of Hysteria," in Surrealism in 1979: 100th Anniversary of Hysteria (Cedarwood, Wisconsin: Ozaukee Art Center, 1978), p. 4; and Whitney Chadwick, Myth in Surrealist Painting, 1929-1939 (Ann Arbor: U.M.I. Research Press, 1980), p. 53.

As a weapon in the Surrealist revolution, hysteria was often exploited in literary endeavours. Breton's Nadja of 1928 is in large part an account of a true hysteric and her influence on the author. On the other hand, some of the more hysterical passages of L'Immaculée conception, a collection of texts published in 1930 by Breton and Paul Eluard, are purely simulated.[131] Interestingly, Max Ernst also made an immaculate conception for his La Femme 100 Têtes, furthering our understanding of the Surrealist hysteric. Entitled "L'immaculée conception manquée" (the might-have-been immaculate conception, fig. 17), the collage is largely derived from an illustration showing a standing male photographer recording the symptoms of a seated female patient in Charcot's clinic.[132] It has been suggested that the elements added by Ernst constitute an iconography of reproduction: a phallic bottle is placed beside a vaginal sunburst supposedly connoting female orgasm (actually a visualization of electrical discharge in water);

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[131] Breton and Eluard, L'Immaculée conception (Paris: Editions Surréalistes, 1930). A useful discussion of both is in J. H. Matthews, Surrealism, Insanity, and Poetry (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1982), pp. 20-36, 68-98.

[132] Stokes, "La Femme 100 Têtes by Max Ernst," pp. 108-112. The source was the nineteenth-century popular science magazine La Nature, whose dry, non-literary format inspired the prosaic layout of La Révolution Surréaliste See Dawn Ades, "La Révolution Surréaliste," in her Dada and Surrealism Reviewed (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, 1978), pp. 189-190.

and the child in the foreground weeps because his conception, though successful, is impure or less than immaculate.[133] It is quite possible that this reading is reversed, for the collage can be more easily understood as an allusion to hysteria as the realm par excellence of non-reproductive sexuality. The standing man is neither doctor nor photographer, for example; he is the captor of the woman, for he could raise the restraining barrier of her bed with a simple gesture, confining her to her role as sexual servant. The sexual contact is non-genital--here it is imperative to recall the Surrealists' preoccupation with non-reproductive attitudes passionelles in their "Recherches sur la sexualité"--because the phallic bottle does not contact the female sunburst. And since no genital contact takes place, there is no threat of reproduction which would presumably restrict the Surrealist to bourgeois parental responsibilities. That is why he prefers the hysteric, whose womb has wandered, and why he is prepared to eviscerate those whose wombs have not (see chapter III, figs. 60-1, 72-7). The child in the foreground, then, does not weep for his unclean birth, but because he is not born at all. In fact, he does not appear in the immediately succeeding plates of the collage-novel. Moreover, the little scampering hare is not, as Stokes would have it, a substitute for the Dove of the Holy Spirit.[134] It seems more likely that it represents the "escape" of fertility. The hysteric is thus not pregnant, and she has no "rapport with the phantom of repopulation," as Ernst noted later in the book.[135] Her sexuality is one of gratification only.

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[133] Stokes, "La Femme 100 Têtes" by Max Ernst, p. 110.

In the second decade of this century, when leftist feminism was in the public eye to a greater degree than it was in the 1920s and '30s, a disdain for genital sexuality was seen as a positive, revolutionary step towards the emancipation of women. To refuse to bear children was to refuse to augment the ranks of the exploited. As Gauthier has noted, Surrealism's perverted (literally misdirected) sex acts could potentially be understood as anti-bourgeois political tactics, especially in light of the previous struggles of French feminists to force the government to abandon its pro-natalist stance.[136] But French feminism was quiescent from 1922, when the Senate definitively defeated the call for universal suffrage. There were feminist assemblies in 1929, 1931, and 1937, but women did not get the vote until 1944. Even the independent legal capacity of women was not recognized until 1938, well after Surrealism's fundamental attitudes were formed.[137] What this digression indicates is that the Surrealist hysteric's non-genital sexuality was only superficially similar to women's rights. Surrealism was, in fact, quite indifferent to the contemporary woman's movement, such as it was, and none of the principal feminists were mentioned in any Surrealist periodical.

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[134] Ibid., p. 109.

[135] La Femme 100 Têtes, p. 287. I had originally thought that the patient was not pregnant because the rabbit did not die. However, subsequent research has revealed that the procedure, properly known as the Friedman test after its inventor, the American Maurice H. Friedman, was in fact not used until 1931, although there was an earlier, German pregnancy test performed on mice as early as 1928, the Aschheim-Zondek test.

[136] Gauthier, pp. 38-57.

The woman sought by the Surrealist, then, was not conceived of as one who would avoid exploitation at all. It was just that Surrealism offered what it thought was an alternative exploitation to that of bourgeois society. One expression of this alternative can be seen in Salvador Dalí's Phénomène de l'extase (Phenomenon of ecstasy, 1933, fig. 18), a collage showing various enraptured female faces, many of which were taken from Charcot's photographs. The image originally followed a text by Dalí on the apparently irrational component of art nouveau architecture, parts of which alluded to sculptural details of girls and angels in rhapsodic abandon on the buildings of Antoni Gaudí. "Continuous erotic ecstasy," wrote the artist, leads to "contractions and attitudes without precedent in the history of statuary." He continued in a subsection also entitled "Phénomène de l'extase" that "the repugnant can be transformed into the beautiful" through such ecstasy.[138] The transformation of the perception of art, architecture, and most other forms of modern life was thus dependent upon the continuous excitation of ecstasy. The sexual abandon of the female hysterics in the collage was one way of accommodating such a desire. Other elements in the collage allude to other solutions, including pornography and prostitution. The former is represented by fragments of pornographic postcards like those in the famous collection of Paul Eluard.[139] Dalí conformed to Breton's taste for the inexplicit by eliminating clear representations of intercourse, but the fragments at the two left corners include mustachioed males, whose ecstasy was probably less hysterical than orgasmic.[140] Prostitution is represented in an equally oblique manner. The earlobes which appear here and there in the image were drawn from the early forensic anthropometry of Alphonse Bertillon, whose contributions to police detection and identification techniques included such things as fingerprinting and the classic mug-shot consisting of frontal and profile photographs. Curiously, Bertillon's enumeration of the characteristics of the human ear was directed primarily at identification of suspects and cadavers.[141] Dalí, on the other hand, sought to exploit the nineteenth-century links drawn between certain physical features and personality traits. Here, he alluded to the search for the so-called Darwin's ear, whose simple convolutions and absence of lobe was supposed to be indicative of the atavism --a word greatly favoured by Dalí--of the prostitute.[142] The criminologists of the nineteenth century had hoped to establish fixed types which would outwardly reveal inner tendencies towards social deviance. Dalí just reversed the terms of the equation, as it were, preferring the deviant to the normal. He did acknowledge, however, that the stereotypy of ears was only "apparent"--that is, not necessarily real. Ears themselves, he continued, were always ecstatic, presumably because their convolutions and concavity were redolent of Freudian vaginal symbolism and the labyrinthine recesses of the mind. Moreover, sex with an ear denies normal reproductive capacity.

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[137] A very thorough discussion is given in Hause and Kenney, pp. 212-281.

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[138] "De la beauté terrifiante et comestible de l'architecture Modern' style," Minotaure, no. 3-4 (12 December 1933), pp. 69-76.

[139] A fairly innocuous selection of these was reproduced in the same issue as Dalí's Phénomène, under the title "Les plus belles cartes postales," Minotaure, no. 3-4 (12 December 1933), pp. 85-100. Around the same date, Maurice Heine made an identically titled collage entirely of such postcards. Its female nudity and overt lesbianism would presumably have been too strong for Breton's taste. See the reproduction in Adam Biro and René Passeron, Dictionnaire générale du surréalisme et de ses environs (Fribourg: Office du livre, 1982), p. 204.

[140] Breton and Aragon's "Le cinquantenaire," is asexual in its definition of hysteria, but visual representations of it there and elsewhere are always female. Jean-Martin Charcot did document at least one case of male hysteria, but the Surrealists were apparently indifferent to or unaware of it. See Charcot, "A propos d'un cas d'hystérie masculine," Archives de neurologie, XXII, no. 64 (July 1891), pp. 1-23.

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[141] See Henry T. F. Rhodes, Alphonse Bertillon: Father of Scientific Detection (London: Harrap, 1956), p. 104; and Suzanne Bertillon, Vie d'Alphonse Bertillon, inventeur de l'anthropométrie (Paris: Gallimard, 1941), pp. 146-163. Bertillon published thirteen titles between 1882 and 1912, and there is no way to determine which of these Dalí knew. Very probably, the artist saw the articles on Bertillon in La Nature (14 May 1910 and 17 May 1913). La Nature was a prime source of collage images for Max Ernst.

[142] The principle source of the correlation was Pauline Tarnowsky, Etude anthropométrique sur les prostituées et les voleuses (Paris: Lecrosnier et Babé, 1889). See the discussion in Gilman, pp. 94-6.

Behind all of Dalí's manipulated images of ecstasy lay the assumption that orgasm transformed the world and was therefore a Surrealist technique. The role of images in this transformation was to excite ecstasy. Since Dalí availed himself of images of pornography, prostitution, and hysteria (understood as sexual freedom), he clearly believed that images provoke--or at least advocate--human behaviour. The quality of that behaviour was often questionable: Dalí once applauded an exhibitionist in a subway, and his visits to brothels were well known.[143] The question is political, however, and not moral; these Surrealist alternatives to bourgeois oppression did not alter the status of women at all. It remained much the same as it was in the nineteenth century.

The history of Surrealism embraced a host of ailments besides hysteria, though women were still implicated in some way in most instances. For example, melancholia or clinical depression was a preferred mode in the early days of the movement, but Breton's gloomy peregrinations anticipated the arrival of Nadja. Similarly, Aragon's assertion that his highest hope was hopelessness cannot be fully divorced from his praise of the suicide bridge to which women drove men in Paysan de Paris.[144] Moreover, the Surrealist path was prepared by the painter Giorgio de Chirico, who praised nostalgia and melancholy as the epitome of the modern mood.[145] His personification of Melanconia (Melancholy, 1912; fig. 19) is a reclining female figure based on the famous Hellenistic sculpture of c.240 B.C. called the Sleeping Ariadne, copies of which are in collections around the world.[146] Ariadne often represents melancholy, if only because Theseus abandoned her on the island of Naxos in Greek myth. Interestingly, given his fascination with Friedrich Nietzsche, de Chirico has invested his Ariadne with all of the personal regret and unrequited yearning that led his favourite German philosopher to describe Cosima Wagner as Ariadne to his own Dionysos.[147] The latter delusion was probably the result of Nietzsche's developing madness, another mental state lionized by de Chirico. In other words, de Chirico's conception of artistic madness was based on the spectre of desire as he had learned it from the case of Nietzsche. What this implies for Surrealism proper is that madness, vaunted for being closer to psychic truth, was equally a matter of learning and that the character of the madness to be feigned was determined by the character of the sources from which it was learned. If the description of women is distorted in the source, it is even more distorted as it is reread by Surrealism.

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[143] Dalí, "Arrestation d'un exhibitionniste dans le métro," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 2 (October 1930), p. 9; Dalí, La vie secrète, op.cit., pp. 216-17. The artist firmly believed that sexual perversion resembled "the process of the poetic fact." See his "Objets surréalistes," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 3 (December 1931), p. 16.

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[144] Breton, Nadja, p. 63; Aragon, untitled aphorism in La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 3 (15 April 1925), p. 13; Aragon, Paris Peasant, trans. S. W. Taylor (London: Jonathan Cape, 1971), pp. 184-5. Breton, too, praised suicide as late as 1930. See Alain Assailly, "Psychanalystes et surréalistes, spéléologues de l'inconscient," Points et contrepoints, CXIII (December 1974), p. 21.

[145] See de Chirico's "Max Klinger (1921)," "Arnold Böcklin (1920)," and "Zeuxis the Explorer (1918)," all reprinted in Massimo Carrà, Metaphysical Art, trans. C. Tisdall (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971).

[146] Reproduced in Gisela Richter, A Handbook of Greek Art, 6th ed. (London: Phaidon, 1969), fig. 227.

While it is true that Surrealist cultural madness, as opposed to real medical debility, is deserving of further investigation to reveal the sources of the misapprehension of women, it is exceedingly difficult to do so because the Surrealists thoroughly covered their tracks. They may have done this because de Chirico had once suggested that madness constituted lost or interrupted memory.[148] It was thus part of the role of the Surrealist simply to forget what had inspired him. As a result, all the artists and poets were against analysis, interpretation, and therapy.[149] Dalí put it most succinctly in the title of a broadsheet printed privately in New York in 1939: "Declaration of the Independence of the Imagination and the Rights of Man to His Own Madness."[150] In spite of this, it has long been known that Max Ernst introduced the Surrealists to the art of the insane as it had been collected and interpreted by Hans Prinzhorn in his publication of 1922, Die Bildnerei der Geisteskranken. Put simply, the art of the mentally ill was seen as an expression of a universal creative urge moving outwards, counteracting the symptoms of psychic disorder which led the other way, to autism and isolation.[151] Insane art was thus much like children's art, also discussed briefly in Prinzhorn's book, in that both forms of expression revealed hidden motivations. Unfortunately, many of the works reproduced and discussed by Prinzhorn already revealed distorted perceptions of women, although it should be noted that the author was more concerned with formal and technical questions than with psychoanalytical symbolism. A case in point is the discussion of Joseph Sell's undated drawing of a Naturaltar (nature altar, fig. 20): Prinzhorn acknowledged that Sell's other works almost always involved sadomasochistic females and that the artist actually advocated human sacrifice. Oddly, however, he did not link the two preoccupations to explain why the victim of a ritual killing and offering to nature was a nude girl.[152] Since an unprofessional diagnosis would be dangerous, it would be safer to point to a learned conflation of the sadistic and the sacrificial like that delineated in chapter II, part b). If the Surrealists' madness was indeed due to deliberate forgetfulness of the cultural origins of delusions regarding women, then Sell's madness was due to sheer ignorance.

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[147] Karl Jaspers, Nietzsche: An Introduction to the Understanding of His Philosophical Activity, trans. C. F. Wallraf and F. J. Schmitz (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1965), pp. 225-6. See also Wieland Schmied, "L'art métaphysique de Giorgio de Chirico et la philosophie allemande: Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, Weininger," in Giorgio de Chirico (Paris: Musée nationale d'art moderne, 24 February-25 April 1983).

[148] "On Metaphysical Art (1919)," in Carrà, p. 88.

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[149] Matthews, Surrealism, Insanity, and Poetry, discusses these issues very thoroughly. Breton's clearest denunciation of psychiatry as an arm of bourgeois conformity is "La médecine mentale devant le surréalisme," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 2 (October 1930), pp. 29-32.

[150] Reprinted as "Déclaration de l'indépendance de l'imagination et des droits de l'homme à sa propre folie," in Dalí's Oui, II: L'archangélisme scientifique (Paris: Denoël/Gonthier, 1971), pp. 104-8.

[151] Barry Schwabsky notes that the current climate of opinion is that Prinzhorn was wrong in this respect. See "Between Art and Schizophrenia: Reflections on the Prinzhorn Collection," Arts, LX, no. 6 (February 1986), pp. 72-3.

A good measure of the art discussed by Prinzhorn did not receive any analysis regarding cultural fashion. The works which most directly inspired Surrealists were thus double fictions: the clinical madness of the patients merely compounded the cultural madness of certain stereotypes. The best example of this chain of influence is one that has already been discussed in recent literature on Prinzhorn, but without reference to the succession of misreadings that comprises Surrealism.[153] In 1931, Max Ernst made a collage entitled Oédipe (Oedipus, fig. 21) which appears to have been based on a drawing made by the psychiatric patient August Neter. Prinzhorn reproduced Neter's Wunderhirte (miracle shepherd, undated; fig. 22), explaining that, for once, the content of an insane work was more important than its configuration. Nevertheless, the analyst did not discuss the content; he noted only that such pictures were often illustrations of schizophrenic ideas with a playful origin. This is quite ironic, considering that Neter himself was quite clear about the cultural stereotypes that inspired the image:

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[152] Hans Prinzhorn, Artistry of the Mentally Ill: A Contribution to the Psychology and Psychopathology of Configuration, trans. E. von Brockdorff (New York: Springer, 1972), pp. 210-11.

> Then there appeared feminine genitals between the leg and the foot, those [sic] break off the man's foot, that is, sin comes from woman and makes the man fall.[154]

Neter's description corresponds rather vaguely to the drawing itself, but we can recognize therein the foot, the feminine genitals--which Ernst would have understood as "castrating" the man's foot--the head of a woman, and a snake, the time-honoured symbol of the fall of man. Now, assuming that Ernst's composition is not just a coincidental similarity of configuration, a plausible reading of the Surrealist's work would once again have to take the sexist cultural stereotype of the *femme fatale* into account. Despite the title, then, what *Oédipe* represents is not "an androgynous figure [answering] the riddle of man's existence,"[155] but a depiction of the mythical Sphinx--the most famous voracious female of early Western culture--after she has castrated Oedipus. She holds his phallus, in the form of a lion's head which replaces a wolf in Neter's drawing, on her own lap, as if appropriating his sexual identity. This appropriation is not androgyny, however, but the sexual mutilation that lay at the heart of Surrealism's pseudo-psychoanalytic conventions.

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[153] Stefanie Poley, "Prinzhorns Buch Die Bildnerei der Geisteskranken und seine Wirkung in der modernen Kunst," in Die Prinzhorn-Sammlung: Bilder, Skulpturen, Texte aus Psychiatrischen Anstalten (ca. 1890-1920) (Heidelberg: Kunstverein, February-March 1980), pp. 60-2. Other writers compound this problem by ignoring the original text. Even Matthews' quite thorough Surrealism, Insanity, and Poetry, p. 19, is not exempt from this charge, for he repeats an error made by Breton in "L'art des fous, la clé des champs," in his Le surréalisme et la peinture, p. 314. The poet called the Prinzhorn book Bildnerei der Geistenkranken, whereas the correct spelling of the last word is Geisteskranken. Matthews' reuse of the mistake suggests that he did not pursue the original.

[154] Prinzhorn, pp. 170-1.

Of course, it is possible to list dozens of examples of Sphinxes in other Surrealists' works, not to mention the seemingly endless lists of hysterics, cataleptic patients, and so on that litter the pages of Surrealist literature. While it would be tiresome to enumerate these in detail,[156] it remains important to note that visual representations of madness do not constitute probable cause for a condamnation of Surrealism as genuinely diseased. Yet, on numerous occasions in the past, writers have virtually diagnosed the movement as a large-scale symptom of a hidden cerebral imbalance. In late 1929, for example, Dr. Georges Gatian de Clérambault dismissed Breton and his circle as a gang concerned only with "saving themselves the trouble of thinking," while the influential Janet saw them as "obsessed persons and doubters."[157] In late 1932, Freud admitted to Breton that he was not sure "what Surrealism wants," and a later letter to a colleague made it clear that he was uncertain because he thought the Surrealists were "absolute...cranks."[158] Most of these early comments were quite vague, but in 1938 Jean Cazaux explicitly stated that Surrealist paintings could be used as documents in psychoanalysis.[159] Subsequent writers have become ever more specific: in 1946, Emilio Servadio characterized the movement as a regression to an undifferentiated pregenital sexuality; three years later, the playwright Henry-René Lenormand confessed that both Dada and Surrealism were infantile regressions with links to hysteria and dementia praecox (that is, schizophrenia in older terminology); and in 1950, Jean Vinchon's L'Art et la folie (art and madness)--the first edition of which (1924) may have been used at the bureau centrale des recherches surréalistes--contained a chapter on Surrealism alone.[160] The pace has not slackened in recent years. In 1973, for example, René Held surveyed works by many of the Surrealists, concluding that they entailed a "temporal regression...to reach the ineffable poetry of the infantile universe, with the great Mother in the background."[161] Even today, both psychoanalysts and art historians insist on interpreting Surrealist works as manifestations of autobiographical information, traumas, or what-have-you.[162] All along, the Surrealists themselves have thought this interest on the part of the diagnosticians to be a great joke. This suggests that the latter have overlooked the true significance of Dalí's oft-repeated declaration that the only difference between himself and a madman was that he was not mad. Indeed, as J. H. Matthews has explained, the Surrealists may have lauded the efforts of a few isolated mental patients, but they did not anthologize their writings, they did not publish the remarks made by them when hospitalized--Nadja, for example, was fair game only until she was interned--and they did not quote the mad texts whose poetic nature they praised.[163] In addition, Breton confessed that certain "considerations of elementary mental hygiene" caused him to call a halt to the hypnotic trances and sleeping-sessions of the early 1920s, because people's lives were actually being threatened.[164] Clearly, then, the Surrealists did not want to be mad or even to appear mad. Nor, for that matter, did they want merely to revitalize a stagnant aesthetic by liberating the imagination from all conceivable restraints. Instead, they sought

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[155] Chadwick, *Myth*, p. 21.

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[156] Sphinxes are of course easily recognizable in the works of Dalí, Ernst, Léonor Fini, and others. Hysterics are a trifle more difficult to discern at first glance, but the odd-looking backward curve called the arc-en-cercle is a frequent clue and can be found here and there in Ernst's Une Semaine de Bonté (Paris: Bucher, 1934) and in Dalí's L'arc hystérique (reproduced in Benayoun, p. 60). The arc-en-cercle is reproduced in Ilza Veith, Hysteria: History of a Disease (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965), fig. 8.

[157] These were two of the medical community's responses to Breton's assertion in Nadja, p. 141, that he would murder the doctor who confined him to a mental ward. See Breton's "La médecine mentale," p. 30.

[158] Freud, letter of 26 December 1932 to André Breton, reprinted in Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 5 (15 May 1933), p. 11. The later letter, of 20 July 1938, was written to Stefan Zweig and is reprinted in his Letters, pp. 448-9.

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[159] Jean Cazaux, Surréalisme et psychologie: endophasie et écriture automatique (Paris: Corti, 1938), p. 55.

[160] Emilio Servadio, "Il Surrealismo: storia, dottrina, valutazione psicoanalitica," Psicoanalisi, II, no. 2 (1946), p. 77; Henry-René Lenormand, Les Confessions d'un anteur dramatique, vol. I (Paris: Albin Michel, 1949), pp. 314-19; Jean Vinchon, L'Art et la folie, 2nd ed. (Paris: Stock, 1950), pp. 68-84. Spector, p. 150, believes the Vinchon study was known in 1924.

[161] Held, pp. 327-8.

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[162] Viederman, and both of the cited works by Charlotte Stokes are good examples.

[163] Matthews, Surrealism, Insanity, and Poetry, pp. 66-7.

[164] Entretiens, p. 95. The text goes on to describe an attempt at mass suicide directed by René Crevel and a knife attack made by Robert Desnos on the person of Paul Eluard (pp. 96-7).

the "penetrable meaning...[of] a human document...outside all aesthetic considerations."[165]

Like visitors to an insane asylum, Surrealists visited a variety of wards, recoiling from some, attracted by others. Perhaps it is not odd that the movement had a prehistory of such visits: when Breton was first struggling to wrest control of his peers--then considered Dadaists--from the more anarchic Tristan Tzara, he had proposed a series of visits to popular tourist sites, the goal of which was "to remedy the incompetence of suspect guides and cicerones."[166] Only one of these events took place, that of the 14th of April 1921 to Saint-Julien-le-pauvre, a little church across the Seine from Notre-Dame. The intention had been to destroy the usual sentimental associations and to replace them with new ones inspired by forerunners like Rimbaud and Lautréamont--a clear anticipation of Harold Bloom's concept of misreading--but the tour was spoiled by a violent downpour. Nevertheless, the same corrective spirit informed later Surrealist visits to the various sites of psychology, as it were. Surrealism could not fully accept madness, but its exploitation was conceivable. Similarly, Breton and his fellows could not fully assimilate Freud without a great deal of superimposition.

From its collected misreadings of the history of the mind, Surrealism garnered enough material to make a rather dramatic claim:

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[165] Breton, Point du jour (Paris: Gallimard, 1934), p. 224.

[166] Sanouillet, p. 245. Sanouillet's short presentation (pp. 244-48) is the most thorough anywhere.

> [Surrealism] tends to ruin once and for all all other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in solving all the principal problems of life ("Manifesto," p. 26).

Penetrable meaning, human documents, remediable incompetence, solvable problems--these are strong words indeed! What they point towards is an inchoate desire, eventually articulated in a call for a new collective mythology which would have a greater psychic impact than older traditions. In doing this, the Surrealists hoped to disabuse themselves of the degenerating social customs which rendered conventional psychoanalysis, like conventional superstition, quite impotent. Dismissing mere etiology on the one hand and spiritualism on the other, Breton, Ernst, Dalí, and the others tried to reinvent the history of the mind to conform to desire. And the prime object of desire, Woman, was woven into a complicated fabric of wholesale appropriations, telling erasures, and bizarre additions until her own psychological history was obscured. She appeared in glimpses here and there, like fragments in a palimpsest, never uncoloured by some other, male overtone. This was the motley fabric that was tailored into Surrealist fashion--a new orthodoxy that was equally as tenacious, as universalizing, and as questionable as the primordial totemic banquet with which we began.

Chapter II: Tradition and the Ineffable States

One of the stories often told about Surrealists concerns their fondness for flea-markets. One often reads an evocative account of one or more serious young men rummaging about the *Marché aux puces* in the vicinity of the *Porte de Clignancourt*, extracting from the jumble of forgotten lives the occasional marvelous *trouvaille*, embodied but unnoticed in some discarded bric-a-brac. The prime example of the tale concerns a Cinderella-spoon found by André Breton under unusual circumstances, but permutations of it have coloured our appreciation of everything from Marcel Duchamp's pre-Surrealist readymades to the burgeoning cult of the Surrealist object in the 1930s.[1] The story as a *type* provides a precise but ignored parallel to other components of the Surrealist project--its systematic investigations of alternatives to the reviled rationalism of European thought. Breton had established a pattern for this process in his "Manifesto of Surrealism" in 1924. His excavation of the poetic past for forerunners took the form of a search through a literary flea-market. Rejecting the respected Dostoevski, the young

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[1] Duchamp's intentions were quite different from those of the Surrealists. See the extensive discussion in Haim N. Finkelstein, *Surrealism and the Crisis of the Object* (Ann Arbor: U.M.I. Research Press, 1979), passim. Breton's account is given in *L'Amour fou* (Paris: Gallimard, 1937), p. 54.

French poet accepted the discarded Sade, the unknown Vaché and the forgotten Lautréamont.[2] One cannot help but think of Breton making his "finds" among an odd assortment of other people's discards, his selection limited to those items in which he recognized a kindred spirit or some personal significance. In a similar manner, his appropriation of psychological sources was eclectic and highly idiosyncratic. But among the more remarkable instances of such borrowings of other intellectual fashions--which seem so wide-ranging and yet so selective at the same time--the most thoroughly misrepresented in literature on Surrealism are those involving mystical or mythic traditions and ineffable states of mind.

By tradition we mean essentially folklore, as it was originally envisioned by W. J. Thoms in 1846: collective learning or wisdom as embodied in important cultural forms--rituals, beliefs, legends, myths, proverbs, and so on--handed down from generation to generation.[3] Given that certain of the states implied by these customs--faith, divinity, clairvoyance, and the like--are presumed to be beyond words, they are ineffable. Instead of the linguistic expression of such states, then, cultural forms seek an _embodiment_ or enactment of them. The telling of a given legend is thus not a simple exchange of information; it is also a device by which the assumed ineffable state can be brought to life--a difficult process since a direct designation of the state would collapse its unutterableness. One thinks of those phosphorescent clocks whose numerals glow more brightly in the dark when they are _not_ looked at directly. Unfortunately, some recent research has concentrated precisely on the fixed gaze, so to speak, describing the influence of folkloric forms on Surrealism on the level of fairly exact linguistic equivalents. For example, one comes away from Whitney Chadwick's discussion of _Gradiva_, the little-known nineteenth-century novella interpreted in a very particular way by Freud, with the impression that it was _originally_ conceived as a myth with a specific meaning, rather than having been manufactured (unsuccessfully) into one _ex post facto_.[4] Similarly, Jean Biès has complained that André Breton's "Second Manifesto of Surrealism" is insufficiently grounded in real Eastern philosophies, misrepresenting Breton's intentions regarding the occult in several important respects.[5]

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[2] "Manifesto," pp. 7, 26-7.

[3] William John Thoms (1803-1885) was a British antiquary who was made a clerk of the House of Lords in 1845. Because he did not want to jeopardize this position with his interest in everything from "low" fairy-tales to "high" myths, he coined the word folklore under the pseudonym Ambrose Merton. See his letter of 12 August, published under the heading "Folk-Lore," in Athenaeum, no. 982 (22 August, 1846), pp. 862-3.

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[4] In all fairness, however, Chadwick's essay is otherwise exemplary. See "Masson's _Gradiva_," pp. 415-22.

There are precious few direct equations of a flea-market find with a specific meaning. Instead, the Surrealists relied on the expectation that their audience would be of a similar mind, with similar inclinations, education and experience. Why else would they have insisted so vigorously that one should read, say, Baudelaire and should not read Gandhi?[6] In other words, to be overdeterminate about the nature of a Surrealist find is necessarily to undermine something of its ineffable character. Our task is instead to share in the Surrealist mixing of metaphors--to mine the same veins of folklore, or to swim the same waters of a reservoir of connotations. The most difficult part of this task is to walk a narrow path between the opposed extremes entailed by the mixing of the metaphors: over-refinement of the ore on the one hand and swallowing too much of the water on the other. As usual, Breton put it more succinctly:

> [M]an must, in all humility, use the little that he knows about himself to reconnoiter what surrounds him. The

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[5] "André Breton et 'le point suprême'," Les Pharaons, no. 24 (Autumn, 1975), pp. 36-46. See also Biès's "Une mystique dévoyée, le surréalisme," Points et contrepoints, no. 113 (December, 1974), pp. 27-38.

[6] See the famous read and don't read lists printed on the back of a catalogue available from the Surrealists' distributor in Paris, José Corti, 1931. It is reproduced in Elizabeth Cowling, "An other culture," in Dawn Ades, Dada and Surrealism Reviewed (London: Arts Council of Great Britain, Hayward Gallery, 11 January-27 March, 1978), p. 456.

> most effective means he has of doing this is poetic intuition...[which] seeks not only to assimilate all known forms but also boldly to create new forms..., manifested or not. It alone provides the thread that can put us back on the road of Gnosis as knowledge of suprasensible Reality....[7]

To some extent, myths, mysticism and the occult are all religious phenomena, for they all articulate certain superficial aspects of one another, while one of their deeper common characteristics is a direct experience of some sort of beatific vision. It would therefore seem very strange indeed that the Surrealists would be interested in religious or quasi-religious states, for they were decidedly anticlerical. The pages of La Révolution Surréaliste bear frequent testimony to this: in March, 1926, Victor Crastre rejected God, preferring to take his place "between the assassin and the blasphemer;" nine months later, the poet Benjamin Péret was photographed insulting a passing priest; and Max Ernst's infamous painting of the Holy Virgin Chastising the Infant Jesus Before Three Witnesses (A.B., P.E. and the Painter) (fig. 23) was reproduced in the same year that it received the first of several protests from Catholic viewers.[8] The most striking example of the Surrealist attitude in this regard was provided by a twenty-one year old abbot who had become obsessed with a young actress. She promised to be his mistress only if he could obtain his bishop's permission. Barred from realizing his desires by the latter and his fellow priests, the young Jean Genbach--known to the Surrealists as Ernest de Gengenbach--attempted suicide and was defrocked. He wrote a letter to the Surrealists, cursing his peers as a "race of misogynists,"[9] and he soon took to wearing clerical attire while entertaining less than reputable ladies. Delighted by Genbach's spirit of blasphemous provocation, Breton introduced him to Parisian society in the Salle Adyar on the third of April, 1927. Within a few years, however, the abbot returned to the Church, publishing anti-Surrealist tracts in spite of some mental instability.[10] Nevertheless, he remains an important stepping stone in our understanding of the

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[7] "On Surrealism in Its Living Works" (1953), in Manifestoes of Surrealism, p. 304. It should be noted that this passage is based in part on the work of René Guénon, an investigator of religious and occult symbolism. This is explored to the point of excess in Eddy Batache, Surréalisme et tradition. La pensée d'André Breton jugée selon l'oeuvre de René Guénon (Paris: Editions traditionelles, 1978).

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[8] Victor Crastre, "Invention de Dieu," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 6 (1 March, 1926), p. 29. The Péret photograph and the Ernst painting were both in no. 8 (1 December, 1926), pp. 13 and 17 respectively. For a brief account of the genesis and history of the painting, see Marcel Jean and Arpad Mezei, The History of Surrealist Painting, trans. S. W. Taylor (New York: Grove, 1960), pp. 131-2.

[9] E. Gengenbach, "Une lettre," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 5 (15 October, 1925), p. 2.

[10] Full details on his later publications are given in Herbert S. Gershman, The Surrealist Revolution in France (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1974), p. 223, note 69.

Surrealist attitude towards religion, for it was not religion in general that Breton and his peers vilified but only its repressive manifestation in the Catholic Church.

Genbach's apostasy had been precipitated by desire, the source of which was in the frustrated connections between his imaginative life and the world around him. In this, he was a virtual illustration of a central tenet of Bretonian Surrealism: free imaginative life was only accessible in childhood, for aging was seen as a process of increasing compromise with society and its institutions. To break free from the repressive implications of bourgeois maturity--that is, the acceptance of severe restrictions on the imagination and hence the impossibility of satisfying desire in the face of "imperative practical necessity"--one had to "turn back toward [one's] childhood" ("Manifesto," pp. 3-4), for childhood "comes closest to one's 'real life'" ("Manifesto," p. 40). This is not necessarily to say that Genbach and the Surrealists were childish, but they certainly explored the possibilities of child*like* behaviour, especially as it was understood by contemporary thought. Indeed, in the writings of Freud alone the Surrealists found ample expression of the notion that children, endowed from a very early age with libidinous strivings of a pregenital nature, were able to realize their desires either imaginatively or in fact. Moreover, contemporary thought linked the cognitive mode of children with those of primitive peoples and mental patients.[11] The point is that Surrealism rejected in a like manner most bourgeois assumptions about the nature of human cognitive functions, as well as Western culture's attitudes towards such things as mental health and even maturity. Genbach's rejection by the Church was an assertion that he had not "grown up" enough to be a mental slave.

Genbach was a find in the larger flea-market of Western culture. But there were other such finds, ultimately of greater importance. One such was Breton's discovery of Hélène Smith, a female medium who had professed to be able to communicate with Martians and Uranians and who had produced drawings of their alphabet and pictographs to prove it.[12] There were many other occultists, but Breton's understanding of them all was rigorously secular:

> We know that this [spiritualistic] doctrine has tried to proclaim...the existence of "spirits"--respect for clarity impels us to use this nauseating terminology.... For us, obviously, the question of the externality of the "voice"...could not even be raised.[13]

Nevertheless, he still found their methods quite useful, for they allowed the practitioner a means of plumbing his own depths, as it were, thus evading societal restrictions. Clearly, Breton saw occult phenomena as psychic expressions of unconscious meaning, like dreams. This is also true of his attitude towards non-Catholic religions and associated traditions: myths, mysticism, and the occult were all understood as different aspects of a healthy quasi-religion, so to speak. Possessed of no dogma that would restrict the imagination or the desires of the practitioner--Breton had written that there was no "conventional Surrealist pattern" ("Manifesto," p. 40) and that Surrealism "asserts our complete nonconformism" ("Manifesto," p. 47)--this quasi-religion located the source of beatific vision within the Self. Interestingly, this reversed the findings of the psychologists who were interested in automatism as an occult phenomenon and who are often cited as the primary influence on Breton's thought. They had clearly linked automatism to the disaggregation of the personality and the dissociation of consciousness.[14] Breton, on the other hand, proposed "nothing less than the unification of that personality."[15] The terminology that the poet and his followers adopted to describe this process was derived from other flea-market finds: Surrealist writings are liberally sprinkled with references to alchemy, the Cabala, the Tarot, sorcery, Eliphas Lévi, Jakob Boehme, Cornelius Agrippa--the list goes on and on. That which characterizes them all is the presence of a fundamentally sacred, holistic vision of the Self within a set of codes, images, behaviours and the like that are superficially irreligious, at least according to the standards of the Church that precipitated the Surrealist revolt. Breton puts it succinctly:

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[11] See, for example, Freud's Totem and Taboo, passim.

[12] See Breton, "Le Message automatique," p. 56. Smith's real name was Elise Mueller.

[13] Ibid., p. 61.

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[14] See Jean Starobinski's extremely important "Freud, Breton, Myers," p. 328.

[15] "Le Message automatique," p. 61.

> I have always taken great pains to lay down that...I break _a priori_ with all spiritualist interpretation...of a certain extra-religious _sacred_... disengaged from the degenerating ritualisms which cover it....[16]

a) _Irreligion: Anti-clericalism and the Black Mass_

Almost all the Surrealist artists had begun their lives as Catholics, a fact which has led more than one commentator to note that blasphemy is closer to faith than indifference.[17] It was once common for some members to be described as Catholics in spite of themselves. Film-maker Luis Buñuel, for example, made a film in 1958, _Nazarin_, which led critics in the popular press to claim him as a reformed Catholic. More recent serious criticism, however, almost always describes the film as atheistic, a reading which Buñuel himself confirmed.[18] This ambiguity, this blurring of the boundaries between Surrealist irreligion and the Church, has seemed in the past to be an ineluctable part of the movement's history. Thus Michel Carrouges, whose book on André Breton's basic philosophical stance was once so warmly welcomed, was later suspected of attempting a rapprochement between Surrealism and Christianity. Breton and Péret surprisingly complicated the issue at first by acting as moderates defending Carrouges against an extremely anti-clerical left wing, but the affair ended with the departure of the defendant and several of his allies.[19] Of course, some of the Surrealists did return to Catholicism--one thinks especially of Salvador Dalí[20]--but the point is not that Catholicism was replaced by Surrealism, with Breton replacing the Pope as its head.[21] It is more a question of Surrealism trying to strip Catholicism of its restrictive character as a social institution, a project which consisted first of tearing it to the ground and inverting all its terms. Surrealism thus was ideologically opposite to the Church, though its structure was somewhat the same. The confusion arises here, like dust from the rubble.

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[16] This paraphrases two separate passages in Breton's _Entretiens_, pp. 238 and 288.

[17] For example, Rubin, _Dada and Surrealist Art_, p. 231.

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[18] See Buñuel, My Last Sigh, pp. 48, 171-6. A brief critical summary of the issue is in Ado Kyrou, Luis Buñuel: An Introduction, trans. A. Foulke (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1963), p. 74.

[19] See Herbert Gershman, "L'Affaire Pastoureau," Yale French Studies, no. 31 (Spring, 1964), pp. 154-8.

[20] Dalí had an audience with the Pope in 1949 and wrote a Manifeste mystique in 1951. See Salvador Dalí, rétrospective 1920-1980 (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 18 December 1979-21 April 1980), pp. 372-4.

[21] Breton had been called the "Pope of Surrealism." See chapter III, note 34.

Surrealist desecration cannot be a matter of dispute: Dalí, for example, drew at least one picture of a woman sexually stimulating a crucified figure (1931); elsewhere, he painted a *Profanation de l'Hostie* (Profanation of the Host, 1929). His second collaboration with Luis Buñuel, *L'Age d'Or* (1930), caused riots in Paris because clerical figures were frequently implicated in scenes of debauchery.[22] Ernst and Masson made similarly anticlerical works, though perhaps with less vehemence.[23] The most blatant examples are surely the paintings of Clovis Trouille, a banal illustrator of transvestite priests and nymphomaniacal nuns. Inasmuch as Trouille had been discovered by Dalí and the writer Louis Aragon and immediately pressed into the service of Surrealism through reproduction, he is yet another instance of a junk-heap find.[24] In fact, much of the anti-clericalism of Surrealism was profoundly influenced by such finds. On the one hand was Lautréamont's Maldoror engaged in a blasphemous conversation with one of God's hairs, left behind in a brothel. On the other were the Marquis de Sade's various profanations of the crucifix, in both his life and works. One could even cite the copulations of maidens and ithyphallic, crucified demons in the art of Félicien Rops.[25] Out of this disparate clutter the Surrealists were able to withdraw the necessary elements for an imaginative, systematic inversion of the Church and its values. A further clue is provided by the writings of Joris-Karl Huysmans.

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[22] The drawing mentioned in the text and a selection of documents and essays on *L'Age d'Or* are available in *Salvador Dalí, rétrospective*, fig. 98 and pp. 100-21. The painted *Profanation* is reproduced in Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, fig. 196. Donald Sutherland describes this type of activity as peculiarly Spanish in "The Ecumenical Playboy," *Arts*, XXXVII, no. 5 (February, 1963), pp. 69-73, which is a review of Robert Descharnes, *The World of Salvador Dalí* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962).

[23] See Rubin, *Dada and Surrealist Art*, pp. 230-1.

In a curious way, Huysmans had linked art and literature, for he had discerned a common element in both Sade and Rops. This consisted of a reversed or bastard Catholicism, as it were, long since recognized in the rituals of Satanism. The artist Rops, for example, had "celebrated that spiritualism of luxury which is Satanism," as Huysmans put it.[26] But perhaps more to the point is the description of a Black Mass given by the Canon Docre in Huysmans' Là-bas of 1891. It takes place in a former Ursuline convent and features the soiling of the Host and various other desecrations. The majority of the participants are women, while the male element consists largely of a laughing ithyphallic Christ with a long neck. The women, of course, are hysterics.[27] These and the other elements of the Black Mass are reversals of the Catholic Mass and can be found in a variety of forms in Surrealism. The desecration of the Host has already been described, while the violation--i.e., reversal--of the convent setting finds echoes ranging from Ernst's Rêve d'une petite fille qui voulut entrer au Carmel (1930) to Luis Buñuel's Viridiana (1961). The laughing Christ reappears in Trouille's Mon tombeau (My tomb, 1947), while the women's hysteria figures prominently as a "supreme means of expression" in Breton and Louis Aragon's "Le Cinquantenaire de l'hystérie."[28]

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[24] Trouille's Remembrance of c. 1930-1 was reproduced among the end-papers of Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 3 (December, 1931). Even positive critics of Trouille acknowledge that his art is astonishingly limited. See Jean-Marc Campagne, Clovis Trouille (Paris: Pauvert, 1965).

[25] See the tangential discussions in chapters II and III. Lautréamont's bizarre dialogue appears in Les Chants de Maldoror (1869), available in English as Maldoror, trans. A. Lykiard (London: Allison and Busby, 1983), Canto III, pp. 100-110. Anti-clericalism appears in all of Sade's writings. See, for example, The Complete Justine, Philosophy in the Bedroom, and Other Writings, ed. and trans. R. Weaver and A. Wainhouse (New York: Grove, 1965), pp. 196ff. For Rops, see Edith Hoffmann, "Notes on the Iconography of Félicien Rops," Burlington Magazine, CXXIII, no. 937 (April, 1981), pp. 206-18.

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[26] Joris-Karl Huysmans, Certains (Paris: Tresse et Stock, 1889), p. 118.

[27] Joris-Karl Huysmans, Là-bas (1891), trans. K. Wallace (New York: Dover, 1972), pp. 241-251. Là-bas means "over there" or "yonder", with a connotation of "down below."

[28] Ernst's Rêve is available in English as A Little Girl Dreams of Taking the Veil, trans. D. Tanning (New York: Braziller, 1982). See especially pp. 9-10. Buñuel's Viridiana is discussed in Kyrou, Buñuel, pp. 77-99. Trouille's Tombeau is reproduced in Campagne, p. 35.

It is the latter point which is of greatest interest in this context, inasmuch as it is the roles of women that we are trying to elucidate. Hysteria, however, was understood in psychological and poetic terms, a conversion of contexts which is discussed most fruitfully in Chapter I. Yet, there was another role for women in the Black Mass of Là-bas: they could serve as a living altar upon which the reversed Mass would be performed. Huysmans' protagonist Durtal discovers in the course of his investigation that the Black Masses of the middle ages had been celebrated on the naked buttocks of women. By the seventeenth century, women's bellies were the preferred place, especially for the notorious Abbé Gribourg, upon whose works Huysmans was said to have based his own.[29] Jules Bois, for whose Le Satanisme et la magie Huysmans wrote an important preface in 1895, further popularized the connection between altar and woman when he illustrated his book with precisely this Abbé performing a Black Mass in this manner.[30]

The Surrealists appear to have taken the connection at face value, for altars and sacrificial sites often take on a female character in their works. Few of these appear blatantly Satanic, though many do present a reversed or inverted aspect borrowed from related phenomena.[31] It has often been said, for example, that Dalí's infatuation with edible women--particularly the ubiquitous Gala, of course--is an inversion of the transubstantiation of the Host, the normal Eucharist being replaced by sexual activity with cannibalistic overtones.[32] Even this highly idiosyncratic association has specific precedents in occult publications dealing with Black Masses. The cover illustration of a popular study of the phenomenon by Jehan Sylvius equated the belly of a nude woman with a ceremonial chalice, implying that consumption, sexuality and ritual were inextricably entwined.[33] In fact, a surprisingly great number of Dalí's eccentricities may have been lifted from previous interpretations of the Satanic in art, just as his famous essay on Picasso's slippers was lifted from a story by Sacher-Masoch.[34] For instance, Huysmans had always insisted that the art of Rops indicated a necessary link between chastity and obscenity, a sentiment which is echoed by the witness of the Black Mass in Là-bas.[35] Dalí's answer to this is to "become erotic while being chaste," an intention carried out in a seemingly endless stream of pranks and seductions without sex.[36]

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[29] Huysmans, Là-bas, pp. 237-8. It had long been assumed that Huysmans' account was based on first-hand experience (see note 45) until Rémy de Gourmount assessed the influence of Guibourg. Rémy's "M. Huysmans, écrivain pieux," Promenades littéraires, I (1919) is very rare, but the bulk of his argument is treated in James Laver's The First Decadent (London: Faber and Faber, 1954), pp. 119ff and passim.

[30] Jules Bois, Le Satanisme et la magie (Paris: Chailly, 1895), illustrations unpaginated. In a similar vein, the magazine L'Assiette au Beurre published a special issue on the Black Mass in 1903. This was a satiric weekly which attracted the creative endeavours of Theophile Steinlen, Kees van Dongen, Jacques Villon, Juan Gris and others.

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[31] The greatest concentration of Surrealist altars was presented at the *Exposition internationale du surréalisme* (Paris: Galerie Maeght, July-August, 1947). Artists chose objects or beings susceptible of being endowed with a mythic life by erecting altars to them in the manner of voodoo cults and the like. Few of these were explicitly female in the sense being developed here, however. Most general books give notes on this exhibition. See, for example, Jean and Mezei, pp. 341-4. At any rate, the idea of Woman as altar was very well established in French literature. Choderlos de Laclos' *Les Liaisons dangereuses*, ed. R. Pomeau (Paris: Garnier/Flammarion, 1962), p. 104, features a libertine using a courtesan as a writing desk. He calls her the "holy altar" of his love. The 18th-century author's name appears on the "Read" list of 1931 (see note 6). Ferdinand Alquié, *The Philosophy of Surrealism*, trans. B. Waldrop (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1965), p. 44, bluntly states that Surrealism is not Satanic. No-one seriously maintains that it is, but it certainly has played at the genre, so to speak. See, for example, the description of Jean Benoît and Matta's self-brandings during the *Exécution du testament de Sade*, 2 December 1959, in José Pierre, *L'Univers surréaliste* (Paris: Somogy, 1983), p. 273.

[32] No book on Dalí is complete without such an observation. The origin of the association is Dalí's link of Eucharistic bread, Gala's hair, the loss of virginity and a reminiscence of consuming his mother, figuratively of course. See Dalí, *La Vie secrète*, pp. 17-18, 256; Carlton Lake, *In Quest of Dalí*, (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1969), p. 23; and Naomi Schor, "Dalí's Freud," *Dada/Surrealism*, no. 6 (1976), p. 13.

Of the other artists whose works responded to the same general atmosphere of blasphemous ritual and female sexuality, the most notable are Max Ernst and the lesser-known Oscar Dominguez. Dominguez's _Machine à coudre électro-sexuelle_ (Electro-sexual Sewing Machine, 1935) bears only a passing resemblance to a real sewing machine (fig. 24); instead, it represents an attempt to capture something of the flavour of Lautréamont's famous simile: "as beautiful as the chance encounter on a dissection table of a sewing machine and an umbrella" (see chapter III). To this flavour Dominguez added a strong seasoning of sacrifice, for the "needle" of the sewing machine is a funnel through which blood from a mutilated beast's head drips onto a naked and submissive figure.

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[33] Jehan Sylvius, Messes noires. Satanistes et lucifériens. Choses vues (Paris: Lutece, 1929).

[34] See Dalí's "Les Pantoufles de Picasso," written for the special Picasso number of Cahiers d'art, VII-X (1935), pp. 208-12. Dalí simply changed nouns, pronouns and selected other words in a short story by Leopold von Sacher-Masoch, "Les Pantoufles de Sapho." Both are reprinted in a companion volume to Salvador Dalí, rétrospective, entitled La Vie publique de Salvador Dalí (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 1980), pp. 52ff.

[35] Huysmans, Certains, pp. 110-17; Là-bas, pp. 248-52.

[36] See the chapter entitled "How to become erotic while being chaste," in Dalí's Unspeakable Confessions, pp. 60-73.

Ernst's imagery is perhaps less explicit, but it is all the more evocative for it. The final chapter of _La Femme 100 Têtes_, Ernst's famed collage-novel of 1929, begins with a plate showing a demonic being manifesting itself in a fanciful cupboard of musical instruments. The caption ensures that the reader will become aware of the incantatory, invocatory nature of the image and the chapter it introduces: "Let us all thank Satan and be happy for the sympathy he has been pleased to show us."[37] The succeeding captions perform a repetitive chant of sorts:

> Continuation.
> Continuation.

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[37] Max Ernst, _La Femme 100 Têtes_, p. 291. For a note on the title, see chapter I, note 49.

The eye without eyes, the femme
   100 têtes keeps her secret.
The eye without eyes, the femme
   100 têtes keeps her secret.
The eye without eyes, the femme
   100 têtes keeps her secret.
   ...She keeps her secret.
She keeps her secret.
She keeps it.[38]

This poetically ambiguous invocation comes to a height in the fourteenth and fifteenth plates. The first of these is captioned "Rome" (fig. 25) and shows a papal procession which is centred upon a nude female figure floating just before the presiding Pope. In the immediate foreground is a man tilted at an angle, pointing a phallic bottle in the woman's direction. His position and action suggest sexual arousal and drunkenness. Given the ritual character of the chapter and Ernst's acknowledged anti-clericalism, a plausible reading of the image is that the nude replaces the conventional altar while the drinker reverses the Eucharist by appearing as a dionysian celebrant.[39] The following plate compounds the ritual significance of the first with a sacrificial flavour: "Paris--swamp of dreams" (fig. 26) parallels a butchered beef carcass, a slaughtered pig on a platter and a woman bound to a vertical altar of sorts. The buildings in the background further support this reading, though they would have been familiar only to those already versed in the lore of Paris. The victim looks upwards in the general direction of the spire of La Sainte Chapelle, the holy chapel completed in 1248 for Louis IX. Surrounding this structure is the complex known variously as the Palais de la cité, the Palais de Justice or the Préfecture de police. The visible portion on the right houses one of the world's more famous prisons, the Conciergerie, in which prisoners of the revolutionary regime awaited their decapitations elsewhere.[40] Given that the Surrealists were obsessed with the parallel between the historical French Revolution and their own--Dali once said their ceaseless talk of it gave him "violent tonsillitis"[41]--the aura created by these intertwined connotations of sacredness and quasi-sacrificial death in the name of revolution could only complement the scene in the foreground. Moreover, the viewer familiar with the Surrealist reservoir of connotations will be aware that the woman in this plate is essentially the same "eye without eyes" mentioned in the preceding incantation, for a little bird in the boat at the lower right reads a book imprinted with the word véron, an alternate spelling of vairon: "wall-eyed" (of horses) or "eyes of different colours." The motif of the eye is discussed in chapter I, but we can note in passing that it often symbolizes the vagina. This would explain how a headless woman could have an eye, how she is an "eye without eyes," and so on.[42] Let us also not forget that the collage-novel was roughly contemporary with Dalí and Buñuel's Un chien andalou (1928) and Georges Bataille's Histoire de l'Oeil (1928), both of which feature mutilation of eyes and a certain sacrificial atmosphere.

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[38] Ibid., pp. 293-313. Michel Butor has made much the same point in "Ce que dit la femme 100 têtes," Répertoire, IV (Paris: Minuit, 1974), p. 327.

[39] This interpretation is in complete agreement with that of Gerhard Zacharias, Satanskult and schwarze Messe (Wiesbaden: Limes, 1964), p. 157. The book is a very thorough history and critical assessment of the satanic cults. Note also that Ernst "said hello to Satan in 1928," as he acknowledged in Beyond Painting, p. 10.

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[40] A useful historical sketch of these buildings and their functions can be found in Klaus Bussmann, Dumont Guide. Paris and the Ile de France, trans. R. Stockman (New York: Stewart, Tabori and Chang, 1984), pp. 134-40.

[41] Dalí, La Vie secrète, p. 223.

b) Sacrifice and Sade: Bataille's Contribution

La Femme 100 Têtes was published at a time of severe crisis for Surrealism. In 1929, André Masson, Georges Bataille and a number of others were expelled by Breton--turned into heterodox Surrealists at best, non-Surrealists at worst. Breton's reasons seemed at the time to be political or aesthetic, though he later acknowledged that a second group of causes was characterized by disagreements over the nature of love.[43] Yet a third group of causes consisted of the degree to which various members were prepared to thrust poetic invention and imagination into the arena of lived experience. Superficially, of course, this was the goal of the Surrealist revolution: for example, Breton himself condemned a convalescent man in a story by Hippolyte Taine for failing "to live out the most beautiful poem in the world."[44] Ambiguously bound up with this idea of practical experience was the degree to which the Surrealists were prepared to acknowledge their predecessors as actual practitioners of a certain behaviour. While it was generally agreed that Baudelaire and Huysmans had actually participated in Black Masses, for instance--an attitude which merely echoed the literary histories of the earlier part of this century[45]--there was no consensus that the Surrealists should themselves celebrate the ritual. Nevertheless, they certainly mimicked trances, seances, mediumistic states and the like.[46]

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[42] For a tangential discussion, including the sources of most of the collages, see Charlotte Stokes, "La Femme 100 Têtes by Max Ernst," pp. 301-31. Ms. Stokes' observations are invaluable, though some of her conclusions are confusing.

[43] See chapter III, note 80 and the "Second Manifesto of Surrealism" (1930), in Manifestoes of Surrealism, passim. See also note 51.

In a very odd way, the Marquis de Sade became the subject of a similar dispute regarding poetry and practice, as it were. Sade's anti-clericalism is familiar enough--the

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[44] Breton, Le Surréalisme et la peinture, p. 14. See also chapter III, note 172.

[45] Baudelaire was presumed to be in contact with a Parisian Satanist group formed in 1846; see Louis Maigron, Le Romantisme et les moeurs (Paris: Champion, 1910), pp. 187ff. Huysmans' research extended from contemporary cults to obscure periodicals of the 1840s; see, for example, Joanny Bricaud, J.-K. Huysmans et le Satanisme (Paris: Chacornac, 1912) and Bricaud's sequel to this, Huysmans, occultiste et magicien (Paris: Chacornac, 1913). See also note 29.

[46] There are plenty of such accounts. One of the more lively ones is in Josephson, pp. 217ff.

Surrealists offered him as a martyr to atheism, and his concept of virtue punished was construed as the return to man of his primitive instincts, circumventing the moral enslavement of Christianity.[47] For all of this, the orthodox Surrealist attitude towards Sade remained rather superficial: Breton had begun by observing merely that "Sade is Surrealist in sadism" ("Manifesto," p. 26). Bataille soon challenged what he saw as the smug complacency of Breton, describing Sade as a person perfectly willing to tear the petals from roses and to toss them into liquid manure.[48] Bataille was trying to get at the interconnected notions of baseness and sacrilege--ideas which he thought had been hidden behind the orthodox Surrealists' screen of bourgeois idealism.[49]

Breton had always thought that Bataille was too obsessive--indeed, Bataille was treated for anal obsession in 1927 by Dr. Adrien Borel[50]--and he immediately counterattacked Bataille's position. If Sade had truly torn roses apart in order to subject them to the vile filth of liquid shit, Breton wrote, then he

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[47] See the quotation in La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 6, 2nd year (1 March, 1926), p. 1; and Paul Eluard's "D.A.F. de Sade, écrivain fantastique et révolutionnaire," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 8, 2nd year (1 December, 1926), pp. 8-9.

[48] Georges Bataille, "Le langage des fleurs," Documents, no. 3 (June, 1929), p. 168.

[49] This is apparent from a contemporary essay which would not be published until 1968. An English translation is "The 'Old Mole' and the Prefix Sur in the Words Surhomme [Superman] and Surrealist," in Bataille, Visions of Excess: p. 34. See also the commentary on pp. 258-9.

[50] See Allan Stoekl's introduction to Bataille's Visions of Excess, pp. ix-xv; also useful is Denis Hollier, La prise de la Concorde: Essais sur Georges Bataille (Paris: Gallimard, 1974), pp. 202-5.

> merely wished by that gesture to attack the poetic *idol*...to try to make the human mind *get* rid of its chains.... [Even] if it is not completely apocryphal, [it] would in no way harm the impeccable integrity of Sade's life and thought.[51]

The "impeccable integrity" of which Breton spoke allowed for none of the licentiousness which is usually associated with the name of Sade. Thus, when Breton described the libertine in later years as one of the great emancipators of desire, he was sure to add that he spoke of "desire and not *license*." Moreover, this desire had always to be "quite *dignified*" (*pleinement dignifié*).[52] Breton's distinctions between dignified and vile behaviours were perhaps obscure and narrowly defined. Suffice it to say that while his Surrealism may have been "exempt from any aesthetic concern" ("Manifesto," p. 26), it did not follow that one should necessarily descend into bad taste. With this in mind, he questioned Salvador Dalí's inclusion of a spatter of excrement in the painting *Le Jeu lugubre* (The

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[51] Breton, "Second Manifesto," p. 186. The italics are Breton's. I have occasionally altered the translations for clarity. In any case, interested readers should consult the French originals in *Manifestes du surréalisme* (Paris: Pauvert, 1977).

[52] Breton, *Entretiens*, pp. 252, 270. Breton's italics.

Lugubrious Game).[53]

The offensive smear in Dalí's painting was not the real issue, but Bataille made use of it in a short article which can be divorced from neither his anal fixations nor his resolution of them. The answer was not to remove or to disaffirm the obsession, but to embrace it: "The stain is both original cause and remedy."[54] In the same article, Bataille emphatically affirmed that Sade's real actions also entailed an embrace of the vile. To replace his story of Sade dipping flowers in manure--he had discovered it was apocryphal, as Breton had suggested--he included a reference to Sade's treatment of Rose Keller, a prostitute who refused to blaspheme and was tortured for it.[55] Bataille's point was clear: Breton and his followers were bourgeois idealists whose virtual apotheosis of Sade had prevented them from realizing his true "conception of terrestrial life in the most outrageous form."[56] To the idealism of these false followers of Sade he opposed the notion of "base materialism," a type of materialism which does not generate scientific generalizations or abstract laws.[57] Within this system, Bataille saw Sade's behaviour take on an essentially sacred cast. He based his argument on ideas drawn from earlier writers: from James George Frazer he derived the idea that the primitive mind--vaunted by the orthodox Surrealists for its acknowledgement of the irrational forms of knowledge--could not distinguish between the sacred and the impure or filthy ("Use Value," p. 102, n. 1). Seeking a philosophical grounding for this notion, Bataille hit upon the term "heterology," the science of that which is "completely other" (pp. 94, 102, n. 2). This was derived ultimately from Rudolph Otto's definition of the sacred as something so fundamentally non-rational and so completely unfamiliar to the viewer that it takes on the aura of the divine.[58] Bataille then fused these concepts, proposing that that which is most unfamiliar to us is that which we have actually ingested but cannot assimilate. Excrement, then, is an example of the completely other--a heterogeneous "*foreign body*...that can be seen as sacred, divine, or marvelous" (p. 94).

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[53] See Dalí, La Vie secrète, p. 229.

[54] Bataille, "Le Jeu lugubre," Documents, no. 7 (December, 1929), pp. 297-302. English version in Visions of Excess, p. 27. A reproduction of the painting can also be found there, fig. 3. Of course, Bataille's assertion ensures that the individual remains fixed at the infantile stage, where Freud had discerned a link between sexuality and the pleasures of excretion.

[55] Ibid., p. 28. The information about Keller and the apocryphal story was provided by Maurice Heine, whose other contributions to the salvage of Sade are discussed in chapter IV.

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[56] Bataille, "The Use Value of D.A.F. de Sade (An Open Letter to My Current Comrades)," Visions of Excess, p. 93. This paper was written in 1929 or 1930 but not published until 1970. Most of the article was reworked in other, published articles of the 1930s. Subsequent references are given in the text.

[57] See "Materialism" and "Base Materialism and Gnosticism" in ibid., pp. 15-16, 45-52.

[58] Rudolf Otto, Das Heilige (1917), available in English as The Idea of The Holy: An inquiry into the non-rational factor in the idea of the divine and its relation to the rational, 2nd ed. trans. J. W. Harvey (New York: Oxford, 1950). Otto's work was first translated into French as Le Sacré. L'élément non-rationnel dans l'idée du divin et sa relation avec le rationnel, trans. A. Jundt (Paris: Payot, 1929). Bataille did not directly acknowledge the debt to this exactly contemporary text.

Bataille managed to link these concepts with Sade:

> The life and works of D.A.F. de Sade would thus have no other use value than the common use value of excrement; in other words, for the most part, one most often only loves the rapid (and violent) pleasure of voiding this matter and no longer seeing it (p. 92).

However, Bataille saw this as missing the point, describing it as a disguised elevation of Sade beyond reality. In the place of such idealism, he proposed a base materialism in the form of heterology, leading

> *to the complete reversal of the philosophical process, which ceases to be the instrument of appropriation, and now serves excretion; it introduces the demand for the violent gratifications implied by social life* (p. 97, Bataille's italics).

Sade's treatment of Rose Keller was just such a violent gratification, a scandalous assertion that the realization of desire--licentious or not--partook of the character of sacredness. What is particularly illuminating about this for our purposes is the set of mental assumptions it reveals as influential on a series of drawings by André Masson.

Masson had known Bataille since November of 1925 and had collaborated with him on a number of projects, including his sexually violent *Histoire de l'oeil* (1928) and the review *Documents*. In the early 1930s, both Masson and Bataille were preoccupied with the frenzied, orgiastic character of Sadeian and sadistic sexual violence--preoccupations which both men would later link with Dionysos and the dionysian figure *Acéphale*.[59] An earlier demonstration of these sacred, violent gratifications was the series of drawings called *Massacres*, most of which complement the sacrificial flavour and dionysian ecstacy discussed above with reference to Ernst. It is important to note, however, that Masson's inspiration was less a matter of the occult than it was of *myth*, especially as it was reinterpreted by Bataille. In the *Massacre* shown in figure 27, rapidly drawn nude males plunge short daggers into the imploring, helpless bodies of nude females. The scene takes place in a wheatfield with a shining sun, and the whole is drawn in such a way as to suggest a pictorial homogeneity. This has led most commentators to see the *Massacres* series not only as an illustration of ancient myths and dionysian orgies, but especially as osmotic fusions of being to being and being to environment.[60] But precisely the contrary is true: for all that Masson found in the flea market of world mythology, he still saw it through eyes accustomed to the light cast by Bataille's interpretations.

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[59] See Masson's article on Bataille, "Le soc de la charrue" (1963), in his *Le Rebelle*, pp. 71-5. On Dionysos and Surrealism in general, see Chadwick, *Myth*, pp. 49-60.

[60] Michel Leiris, "Idoles," in M. Leiris and G. Limbour, *André Masson et son univers* (Geneva and Paris: Trois Collines, 1947), pp. 169-72.

James George Frazer's Golden Bough, a mammoth, world-famous study of magic, religion, ritual and myth, has been described as Masson's favourite source of primitive mythology.[61] The book is bulging with references to mother-goddesses, earth deities, and the like, but the theme which seems to have preoccupied Masson was the violent fertility ritual. In 1931, the third volume of the full twelve volume edition of the Golden Bough was published in Paris under the title Le dieu qui meurt, the dying god.[62] Masson came to know the work almost immediately,[63] but he mistook the author's intentions. Frazer's purpose in the book was to discover why so many cultures had practised the violent killing of a man-god or his mortal representative. He concluded that the action was inspired by a fear that

> with the enfeeblement of his body in
> sickness or old age [the man-god's]

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[61] Evan Maurer, "Dada and Surrealism," in "Primitivism" in 20th-Century Art, ed. W. Rubin (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1984), volume II, p. 549; Michel Leiris, "Mythologies," in Leiris and Limbour, pp. 125-31.

[62] J. G. Frazer, Le dieu qui meurt, trans. P. Sayn (Paris: Geuthner, 1931).

[63] Confirmed by the artist in Clébert, p. 38. Masson confuses Le dieu qui meurt and Les dieux qui meurent, which is his designation for the dying gods illustrated in Sacrifices, a suite of prints published in 1936. Chadwick, Myth, p. 59 errs wildly in translating this as "the gods who murder."

> sacred spirit should suffer a corresponding decay, which might imperil the general course of nature and with it the existence of his worshippers, [and] to arrest the forces of decomposition in nature by retrenching with ruthless hand the first ominous symptoms of decay.[64]

It is tempting to see the Massacre as an illustration of this theme: women, cut down like sheaves of wheat, act as guarantors that the cycle of fertility will be endless--the harvest, after all, precedes decay. But the artist has reversed some of Frazer's terms: historical ritual victims were almost invariably male--hence the book's title--whereas the victims of Masson are usually female. The artist himself has stated that he did not know why this was so,[65] which tends to make difficult to accept those interpretations which link the Massacres to Masson's uneven relationships with women.[66] Moreover, he has defended himself against charges of misogyny by referring to "the ritual, sacrificial cast" of the act.[67] At this point, the mists begin to clear and we can see the Massacre for what it is, a conflation of elements of Frazer and

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[64] J. G. Frazer, the Golden Bough, vol. III: the Dying God (1911) (New York: Macmillan, 1935), pp. v-vi.

[65] Clébert, p. 41.

[66] For example, Carolyn Lanchner, "André Masson: Origins and Development," in William Rubin and Carolyn Lanchner, André Masson (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 197), pp. 133-5; Chadwick, Myth, p. 51.

[67] Clébert, p. 41.

Sade[68]--themselves considered purer and more natural than the social inhibitions against which they seem to rebel. Furthermore, this conflation is analogous to that in the writings of Bataille. The disturbing conclusion is that the Massacre is not an image of homogeneity and osmotic fusion, but its direct opposite--Bataille's heterogeneity. The female victims are considered "completely other," potential signs of decay which must be ruthlessly retrenched, tilled under like the fertilizing excrement of which they are unacknowledged echoes. The Woman in the role of Ernst's sacrificial altar doubles as Masson's sacrificial victim.

Such a treatment of Woman could not have evolved from its Sadeian roots without Bataille's intervention--his unique, heretical contribution to Surrealist irreligion. Masson took inspiration from Bataille's heterology, itself inspired in part by Frazer, to reverse not only Catholicism, but also pagan ritual and the whole "philosophical process," as Bataille himself had put it. In a word, Masson feminized Frazer's dying god--a clear distortion of ritual origins--so that he could conflate the Sadeian and the sacrificial. Woman was thus forced into the role properly ascribed to the dying male, not because she was better suited for it, but because Masson followed Bataille in maintaining her heterogeneity, her otherness. This is all the more disturbing when we note that Bataille once advocated actual human sacrifice, a plan that was fortunately abandoned.[69]

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[68] Georges Limbour's essays, "Preface à la deuxième exposition" (1929) and "La discorde" were the first to acknowledge Masson's debt to Sade. Neither essay, however, links this to Bataille. Both are reprinted in Leiris and Limbour, pp. 47-50, 149-56.

c) Agriculture and Earth-Mothers

When Masson and Bataille placed the Sadeian and the sacrificial in close proximity, they articulated a series of nineteenth-century connotations running from the fundamentally evil character of Nature to the identity of Woman as the eternal Victim or the Suffering Innocent. Sade had written: "Being good is contrary to Nature, *which is evil*." Poe had written: "The death, then, of a beautiful woman is, unquestionably, the most poetical topic in the world."[70] Bound up with these profoundly melancholy images was the idea that Woman was a creature of nature. Baudelaire, drawing equally from Poe and Sade, wrote: "Woman is natural, that is to say abominable."[71] Although it is abundantly clear that the Surrealists knew such statements very well, it is not even necessary to allude to them, for the restriction of Woman to the realm of nature alone was a firmly entrenched practice of Western culture. We need not rehearse all of the reasons for this misguided phenomenon, but a resume of the principal points of view is illuminating.

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[69] See Roger Caillois, "The *Collège de Sociologie*: Paradox of an Active Sociology," *Sub-Stance*, no. 11-12 (1975), pp. 61-4.

[70] On Sade, see Hilary E. Holt's untitled introduction to Sade's *The 120 Days of Sodom* (North Hollywood, California: Brandon House, 1967), p. x. The italics are Sade's. On Poe, see chapter I of this study. Still very important in tracing this series of connotations in nineteenth-century culture in general is Mario Praz's *The Romantic Agony*, 2nd ed., trans. A. Davidson (London: Oxford University Press, 1951).

[71] See the section of the *Journaux intimes* entitled "Mon coeur mis à nu," part III, in *Oeuvres complètes*, ed. Y. G. Le Dantec and C. Pichois (Paris: Gallimard/Pléiades, 1961), p. 1271.

Even from the time of Aristotle, philosophers had insisted on spelling out what one writer calls a "litany of contempt for women."[72] This is because much of philosophy had always been preoccupied with the mind-body problem, that human tendency to postulate a definitive difference between the psyche and physical nature.[73] Women were considered primarily as body, for the obvious reason that it is they who conspicuously procreate. Since Western culture in general prized the soul over the body, any concern for the flesh was understood as womanly and undignified. Females and babies were seen as necessarily belonging to each other, a "natural" bias which, by unreflective extension, justified their absence of political consciousness and greater social participation. Men, therefore, came to be seen as necessarily outside the "natural" unit, an observation which was linked to the structural fact of male activity in the extrafamilial domain. At this point, culture became exclusively male, subsuming all that was of the mind or soul. On the other hand, nature became exclusively female, and its preoccupation with the flesh was abominable, as Baudelaire put it. This was intertwined with the ideology of patriarchy,[74] a large component of which was based on philosophical somatophobia--etymologically speaking, knowledge-loving and flesh-loathing.[75] The international feminist movements of the nineteenth century fought against such stereotypes, principally in the struggle for the right to vote, but in a myriad of other ways as well. Yet in spite of this--perhaps because of it--the "natural" bias remained ubiquitous. It is for this reason that the concept of matriarchy, often pulled out in discussions of Surrealists as a supposed proof of their benevolent attitude towards women, is an inadequate justification of the same equation of Woman and nature. It is as if, by a sleight of hand, the patriarchalists represented themselves as matriarchalists.

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[72] Elizabeth V. Spelman, "Woman as Body: Ancient and Contemporary Views," Feminist Studies, VIII, no. 1 (Spring, 1982), p. 109.

[73] An introduction to the five basic stances with respect to this problem--physical monism, neutral monism, Cartesian interactionism, psychophysical parallelism and epiphenomenalism--can be found in Gilbert Ryle, The Concept of Mind, rev. ed. (London: Hutchinson's, 1966).

The principal exemplar of this nostalgic prestidigitation is Johann Jakob Bachofen, whose influential study of mother-right, Das Mutterrecht, was first published in 1861. Whitney Chadwick, for one, bluntly states:

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[74] The argument is based loosely on Sherry Ortner's "Is female to male as nature is to culture?" Feminist Studies, I (Fall, 1972), pp. 5-31.

[75] Spelman, p. 119f.

> Bachofen's description of a social organisation based on the principles of equality, respect for human life and the power of love, advanced one alternative to the deeply entrenched patriarchal social and political order which had shaped the Surrealist revolt.[76]

More recent writers, however, have maintained that Bachofen's concept of mother-right could not have existed without the depoliticized--that is, "natural"--ideals of Woman and her essential role as Mother. Women are therefore left behind as mere social and biological relics of an earlier stage of the evolution of patriarchal civilization.[77] Interestingly, Bachofen's theory of cultural evolution was almost exactly contemporary with Charles Darwin's *Origin of the Species* (1859). The fact of the matter, therefore, is that Bachofen's *Das Mutterrecht* is *not* just about matriarchy. It also deals at great length with the *passage* from matriarchy to patriarchy--the survival of the fittest?

Very simply, Bachofen's description of cultural evolution consists of three stages. The first and most primitive stage he called the tellurian or hetaerist period. This was an era with no state, no agriculture, and no law aside from the *ius naturale*, the "natural" law of lust. Society consisted of a primitive horde led by a powerful male tyrant whose status permitted him to use any female of the horde.[78] Motherhood, far from being the rosy, ideal state described by Chadwick, was the result of lustful concubinage, and women were perceived as the prey of all men. Presumably, this situation became socially intolerable, so marriage was instituted as a regulative principle. This led directly to the second stage of culture, which Bachofen called the lunar, or matriarchy proper. This period saw the growth of agriculture, the communal ownership of property, the authentication or legitimacy of birth through marriage, and the recognition of conjugal motherhood. This clearly reveals that Bachofen's mother-right was at no point an expression of political power. He even characterized the female superiority of the legendary Amazons as "savage degeneration" (p. 105). No, Bachofen's matriarchy was at best a recognition of matrilineal descent in terms of fruitfulness, nourishment, and kinship, with its attendant symbolic expressions in religion and magic. The most important point to note is that Bachofen expressly identified this stage as natural and animal in character (pp. 109f). He reserved the designations of cultural and human for the third stage of cultural evolution, patriarchy. This he called the solar period, consisting of individual ownership of property, the division of labour, and conjugal father-right.

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[76] Chadwick, *Myth*, p. 33f.

[77] Sharon W. Tiffany and Kathleen J. Adams, *The Wild Woman: An Inquiry into the Anthropology of an Idea* (Cambridge, Mass.: Schenkman, 1985), p. 8f.

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[78] J. J. Bachofen, Myth, Religion and Mother-Right: Selected Writings of J. J. Bachofen, trans. R. Manheim (Princeton: Princeton, 1967), p. 141. Subsequent references to this edition will be retained in the text.

The goddess most representative of the first or telluric period was Aphrodite, whose original identity as instigator of the reproductive cycle was later reduced by the Greeks to a mere "goddess of love" (pp. 57, 192). More importantly, the central goddess of the second or lunar period was Demeter, whose multiple manifestations all stem from a common root in the cultivation of corn (pp. 191-6 and passim). The irony here is that Bachofen's notions do not merely provide us with "a powerful female principle...to emphasize the fundamental biological and spiritual forces that distinguish woman's experience from that of man."[79] On the contrary, Bachofen makes it quite clear that corn is a product of agriculture, itself the first stage in the transition from female nature to male culture. In other words, Demeter is the counterpart of the domesticated soil, the ordered nature--the cultivation (cultura) of the field (ager).[80] The adjective demetrian still rings with some primordial, transcendant authority, but the adjective form of the Greek version of Demeter, Ceres, clearly loses all authoritative connotations: cereal. In a word, the once all-powerful force of fertility is merely a vegetable product of male innovation.

Bachofen describes joyous harvesters cutting the limbs of Ceres--presumably ears of corn--and an orgiastic sexuality practiced not for lust, but for fruitfulness (p. 191f). At this point, the knotty problem of Masson's Massacre series begins to unravel a little further, for the Sadeian and sacrificial slaughter of women seems merely another expression of Woman as domesticated earth, Bachofen's laborata Ceres. And although Masson was the only artist of the first Surrealist generation to make explicit reference to Bachofen,[81] the notion of Woman as domesticated soil runs through exactly contemporary works of many others. In most cases, there is an explicit sexual analogy: the phallic sun fertilizes the receptive earth, just as the plough tills the soil and the human phallus penetrates the vagina. Dalí, for example, described in this manner a pitchfork stuck in the earth in Jean-François Millet's painting The Angelus (1855-7). His first account was published in 1933, in precisely the same magazine that reproduced Masson's Massacres.[82] Similarly, Bataille had described the sun touching the earth as a "great coitus" in a text illustrated by Masson in 1931.[83] The Massacre is likewise a plurivocal metaphor of human sexuality, partaking of both the benevolence of the sun and the malevolence of the blade.

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[79] Chadwick, Women Artists, p. 182.

[80] Tiffany and Adams, p. 100.

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[81] Clébert, p. 38; see also Masson's "A propos de 22 dessins sur le thème du désir (1948)," in Le Rebelle, p. 27 and p. 55, note 78.

[82] Dalí, "Interprétation Paranoïaque-critique de l'Image obsédante L'Angélus de Millet," Minotaure, no.1 (February, 1933), pp. 65-7. Masson's drawings were on pp. 57-61. Dalí's ideas are much more thoroughly developed in Le Mythe tragique de l'Angélus de Millet (Paris: Pauvert, 1963). He even found a nineteenth-century American cartoon of a woman "plowing" a field with a penis (p. 12).

As in all instances of frenzied coitus, the male is permitted the momentary loss of reason, as if he had temporarily descended to the level of the female, beasthood. This is a theme which one finds everywhere in the writings of Bataille in the late 1920s and 1930s. The symbolic expression of it takes the form of the fall of Icarus in the early examples; in the later ones, it is invariably described as "acephalic"--headless and dionysian.[84] Masson collaborated with Bataille very closely in this investigation, and it is very interesting to note the degree to which Bachofen's ideas also play a role. It seems that Bachofen's second stage of cultural evolution, the lunar matriarchy proper, was composed of two distinct phases: the first was marked by matrimony and the development of agriculture. Both of these concepts indicate the degree to which mother-right was in fact a patriarchal prestidigitation. We have already dealt with the latter, and we must now consider the former. Matrimony now means marriage; originally it meant the female equivalent of patrimony: the child's inheritance of a mother's property. Matrimony appears to have become a synonym of marriage only when it was considered advantageous for men to expropriate female property.[85] Bachofen's much-vaunted matriarchy thus came into existence only as the first step towards a patriarchy that would ultimately replace it. As if this were not corrupt enough, Bachofen insisted that the second phase of the lunar period was dionysian (p. 114). He pointed out that the dionysian phase involved a regression to hetaeristic lust: the dying sun-god fertilized the earth with his phallic power in an attempt to provoke receptive matter (i.e., soulless female bodies). Masson's curious admixture of Sade, sacrifice, sex and cereal is intimately bound up with these ideas. It is no surprise that he could not understand why the victims of his Massacre were female (see note 65): the causes have much less to do with his conscious attitudes than with deeply entrenched traditional stereotypes, hidden in elusive, often inchoate forms.

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[83] Bataille's "The Solar Anus" was written in 1927 and first published in 1931. See Visions of Excess, p. 7.

[84] For Icarus, see Bataille's "The 'Old Mole' and the Prefix Sur in the words Surhomme and Surrealist," Visions of Excess, p. 37. Acéphale and Dionysos figure prominently in a number of other essays in the same volume. For example, see "Propositions," pp. 199-200, and "Nietzschean Chronicle," pp. 205-7, 210.

Armed, however unintentionally and unknowingly, with such stereotypes, Masson moved on in the 1930s to a very fruitful exploration of one of Bachofen's more misunderstood images, the great earth-mother or primeval mother-goddess. Usually, critical discussion of these mythic creatures alludes to Breton's call for an elaboration of the "collective myth belonging to our period,"[86] a call that was almost exactly contemporary with Masson's reconciliation with Breton. However, we shall see that Masson's art continued to be compromised by his allegiance to some of the ideas of Bataille.

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[85] Barbara Walker, "Matrilineal Inheritance," Woman's Encyclopedia, p. 621.

Neither Breton nor Max Ernst, who described himself as "a young man aspiring to become a magician and to find the myth of his time,"[87] meant to examine myth as a straightforward ethnological phenomenon. They both drew attention to the potential significance of primitive and ancient mythologies for their contemporaries, the civilized men of the post-war period. The myth to which both referred involved a return to what they saw as a simpler form of life, one which could be lived within Western civilization, but without its repressive effects on primal urges.[88] The Surrealists' profound interest in the arts and myths of primitive cultures was a symptom of their desire to isolate and cultivate these urges. Moreover, their interest in the arts of children and the mentally disturbed were reflections of contemporary scientific interest in the favourable comparisons of so-called savage states of mind with those which Western society deemed abnormal or immature.[89] This cannot be developed here, but it can be characterized as essentially regressive. The child, the primitive and the insane are all regressive in that they revert to chronologically earlier or less adapted patterns of behaviour and feeling. In the Surrealist lexicon, "less adapted" would mean less repressed, less inhibited by the constraints of bourgeois morality and the like.[90] In rummaging around in the myths of presumably less adapted societies, the Surrealists hoped to establish a new mythology expressive of their own dilemma. They wanted to be able to respond to their primal urges without restrictions; they wanted to live their lives according to the pleasure principle--as Breton put it, "to live out the most beautiful poem in the world."

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[86] "Limites non frontières du surréalisme," Nouvelle Revue Française, (1 February, 1937); reprinted in La Clé des Champs (Paris: Sagittaire, 1953); English translation in Herbert Read, ed., Surrealism, 2nd ed. (London: Faber and Faber, 1971), p. 109.

[87] "Some data on the youth of M. E., as told by himself," in Beyond Painting, p. 29.

[88] Most studies include discussions of this point. See, for example, Alquié, pp. 42-55.

The bulk of Surrealist myth research took place in the

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[89] See, for example, Freud's Totem and Taboo, which included a section on the return of totemism in childhood. The English subtitle is equally telling: Some Points of Agreement between the Mental Lives of Savages and Neurotics, trans. J. Strachey (New York: Norton, 1950). The French edition known to the Surrealists was Totem et tabou: interprétation par la psychanalyse de la vie sociale des peuples primitifs, trans. S. Jankélévitch (Paris: Payot, 1924, reprinted 1925).

[90] Freud explicitly linked regression and the general concept of libido in Three Essays on Sexuality (1901-5), S.E., VII, pp. 123-243.

1930s, a decade which had opened with the publication of L'Immaculée Conception, a volume of poetic exercises in the simulation of mental disorders by Breton and Paul Eluard. This was less an exercise in style than it was an attempt to discover the "Points of Agreement between the Lives of Savages and Neurotics," as the subtitle to Freud's Totem and Taboo put it.[91] Known since its first French translation of 1924, Freud's study also offered psychoanalytical interpretations of various mythic structures, most of which were derived from Frazer's Golden Bough.[92] Freud's explanations were of great interest to the Surrealists, though they repudiated the psychoanalysis of their own work at every opportunity.[93] They did adhere to certain abstract notions: Freud described art as the only human endeavour which could bypass the intellect to manifest an approximate accomplishment of one's desires. This process, which he called "the omnipotence of thought",[94] also explained most occult phenomena, such as clairvoyance, as the intersection of the contents of the unconscious and those of the outside world. The latter function as triggers, bringing to consciousness forgotten or repressed information. The Surrealists called this process objective chance, the expectation and interpretation of signs, or simply magic art, and they preferred to retain the aura, if not the objective fact, of the occult.[95] Most writers on the subject have acknowledged this element of pseudo-supernatural intervention, but few have gone beyond the superficial observation to note fully how the whole process can be used to understand the character of the images that some Surrealists appropriated from the myths discussed by Frazer and Freud. For example, Evan Maurer has remarked that André Masson's painting The Earth (1939, fig. 28) "evokes the underlying idea of woman as an embodiment of the earth itself, a concept frequently found in Primitive beliefs."[96] Whitney Chadwick did not go much further when she noted that the same painting expresses "the female's double nature, simultaneously nourishing mother and harbinger of death."[97] What both writers failed to observe is that the image, drawn from a less-adapted or supposedly purer stage in human development, was in fact a statement of contemporary significance.

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[91] Cf. the brief description in Philippe Audoin, Breton (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), p. 198.

[92] The first edition was two volumes (1890); the second was three (1900); the third was twelve (1911-15). Some sections of Freud's book were lifted from Frazer with very little alteration; e.g., p. 37 reads the same as pp. 212-3 in the Golden Bough, abridged ed. (New York: Macmillan, 1922).

[93] See chapter I, p. 25.

[94] Totem and Taboo, p. 90.

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[95] The second chapter of Carrouges, pp. 10-66, is very good on this point. Most surveys of Surrealist art include some commentary to this effect. Of the growing number of articles, one stands out: José Pierre, "Du surréalisme comme art magique," Si e no, I, no. 4 (Rome, March 1975), pp. 3-25. Pierre's discussion includes connections to Freud's Totem and Taboo.

[96] Maurer, pp. 551-549.

[97] Chadwick, Myth, p. 32.

It is tempting to say that The Earth is a very positive, even proto-feminist image, for it seems to dispense with Western religion in favour of a return to a primeval mother-goddess. Readers of current feminist theology would no doubt agree. Carol P. Christ, for example, believes that the reintroduction of the goddess is necessary and even revolutionary because she legitimizes characteristically female powers and validates women's experiences, including menstruation. Furthermore, she fosters humankind's acceptance of its rooting in nature and its mortality, both formerly suppressed by patriarchal society.[98] In this sense, Masson's painting seems a straightforward illustration of the goddess as a new centre of the universe. The painter even foresaw Christ's feminist theology in adhering scrupulously to long-established conventions of representation: the goddess is faceless, without feet, unclothed, large-breasted, lactating, and exposing her genitals.[99] Even the sand mixed into the oil medium assists in her identification with the soil, around which spins the rest of the cosmos. She is the landscape, and in her all creatures live and move and find their being. But of course, Masson could not foresee the future, an irreducible fact that has led most researchers to dwell on his reading of Bachofen's Das Mutterrecht. Masson might even be said to have confirmed this association of ideas by enthusiastically declaring himself to be matriarchal.[100] But if Masson thoroughly accepted all that Bachofen had written, then he must surely have agreed that every woman's womb is "the mortal image of the earth-mother Demeter" and that "this religious primacy of motherhood leads to a primacy of the mortal woman."[101] In fact, this attitude is far closer to that of the "patriarchal...order which had shaped the Surrealist revolt" (as Chadwick put it above) than it is to that of any thinking woman with a revolutionary bent. The first World War had established a need for repopulation in France which led to repressive laws against abortion and contraception, as well as to general attitudes disparaging single women. Begun in 1919, this pro-natalist campaign culminated in the very year Masson painted The Earth: a decree-law of July 1939 offered various financial inducements to women who fulfilled their maternal role.[102]

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[98] "Symbols of Goddess and God in Feminist Theology," in Carl Olson, ed., The Book of the Goddess, Past and Present (New York: Crossroads, 1983), pp. 248-50.

[99] Cf. the description given in Anne L. Barstow, "The Prehistoric Goddess," in Olson, pp. 7-15.

Masson wrote a letter to Daniel-Henri Kahnweiler in

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[100] See Clébert, p. 38.

[101] Bachofen, pp. 80-87.

[102] A. Sauvy, Histoire économique de la France entre les deux guerres (Paris: Fayard, 1972), pp. 386-8.

December that corroborates this impression:

> I am delighted with the continuation of my reading of the work of George Meredith, which I began in 1932. This delight comes in part from Meredith's confirmation of ideas I hold dear: the identity of woman and Nature, for example.[103]

Anyone familiar with the works of Meredith will know that Masson has concentrated only on the themes of the English author's nature-poems, for his novels made significant strides in the portrayal of the emancipated women of the previous century.[104] Given that such enfranchisement is a cultural phenomenon, Masson's assertion that women are part and parcel of nature is quite reactionary. Even today, feminists find it necessary to be very precise in answering the question: "Is female to male as nature is to culture?"[105] Masson's painting is explicit only about woman as fertile, reproductive nature, but it is implicitly intertwined with the ideology of patriarchy. The primary significance of the mother-goddess, after all, was that she was capable of endless reproduction, whereas the most outspoken of the contemporary French feminists were almost universally in favour of the right to female bachelorhood, free access to contraception, and abortion upon demand.[106]

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[103] Reprinted in its entirety in Masson's Le Rebelle, pp. 260-261.

[104] Masson seems not to have been aware of this interpretation, common among French critics. See René Galland, George Meredith: Les 50 premières années (1828-1878) (Paris: Les presses françaises, 1923), pp. 344-57, 389. More recent confirmation can be found in Gail Cunningham, The New Woman and the Victorian Novel (London: Macmillan, 1978), pp. 119-31.

[105] See Ortner, passim.

The revolutionary intentions of such art were seriously compromised by this unintentional instance of Masson's culturally-determined "omnipotence of thought". The repressed contents of his unconscious were not mystical or psychological abstractions but reflections in part of the deeply ambiguous disposition of his society to the role of women. The way in which this was manifested, in keeping with "objective chance", was stumbled upon in his mythological researches. For example, in 1938 Masson made a drawing later used in the prologue of his 1943 publication, Anatomy of My Universe (fig. 29). There, among other things, we find another reclining mother-goddess. She is the source of life and death, as symbolized by the two fetal forms at the lower left, one healthy and the other skeletal. Above the goddess is a stylized bird which flies, via tiny repetitions of its form, into the heavens from right to left. Its trajectory forms a configuration not unlike a constellation. Slightly to the right, the sun whirls furiously. The other elements of the drawing were of less lasting interest, for the artist dropped them from a very similar watercolour, Le mur métaphysique (The Metaphysical Wall (1940, fig. 30). The key to the iconography was provided by Frazer's Golden Bough. Both pictures associate an image of death with a male figure, whereas the image of life is associated with a female figure. The implication is that the male must die in order to ensure the fertility of the female, just as in Frazer's stories of dying gods.

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[106] The Bibliothèque Marguerite Durand, Place du Panthéon, Paris, is full of texts to this effect. See the excellent anthology Le grief des femmes, 2 vols., ed. M. Albistur and D. Armogathe (Poitiers: Hier et demain, 1978). The second volume includes selections by Paule Minck, Nelly Roussel, Madeleine Pelletier, Henriette Alquier and Bertie Albrecht (pp. 174-200).

The flight of the stylized bird echoes this association, for it is the Phoenix. Not merely a bird which is cremated and reborn, the Phoenix had appeared in Frazer's books as an embodiment of the sacred king who had to be immolated to set the fertility magic into motion.[107] After cremation, the Phoenix would rise to heaven in the form of the morning star, which is related in almost all mythic traditions to the phallic principle which achieves union with the mother-goddess.[108] Now, Masson may not have known that in the Western traditions this morning light is known as the light-bringer, Lucifer. Nevertheless, the structural elements of the tale appear in various guises in Frazer's and Masson's works, so it serves as an interesting model. Lucifer's role was to announce the coming of the sun, the solar god which we see spinning to the right in the prologue drawing and leaping from the top of Le mur métaphysique like a "thinking eye," as Masson wrote.[109] Lucifer is thus subordinate to the solar god, to Jehovah or Yahweh. The light-bringer, despite his lower status, coveted the superior glory of the solar god, the father, and sought the sexual favours of the earth-goddess, the mother. Christian church fathers explained Lucifer's desires as the sin of hubris, a word usually translated pride but actually meaning sexual passion.[110]

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[107] See the abridged edition of the Golden Bough (1922), pp. 328, 332-3. This was available in France as Le Rameau d'Or, trans. Lady Frazer (Paris: Geuthner, 1923), with subsequent reprintings.

[108] This was precisely the significance of the Phoenix as it appeared in John Dee's Monas Hieroglyphica of 1564. Masson must have known it, for his friend Michel Leiris reviewed the French translation by Grillot de Givry (Paris: Chacornac, 1925) in La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 9-10 (1 October, 1927), pp. 61-3. Moreover, he noted the close relationship that images like the Phoenix bear with the "phallic yod," the tenth letter of the Hebrew alphabet (p. 63). On Masson's awareness of the occult, see his "Peindre est une gageure," in Le Rebelle, p. 14. For another Phoenix, see E. A. Wallis Budge, Gods of the Egyptians, II (New York: Dover, 1969), p. 97.

Now, Freud was well aware that the stories presented by Frazer spoke of issues that ran deep in the minds of men and that they were not simply tales of supernatural beings with few roots in human behaviour. The sex act itself had long been known as the primary means of activating fertility magic in many primitive societies, and Freud sought to explain Frazer's dying gods with reference to such sexual passion. In Totem and Taboo, the Austrian psychoanalyst proposed the existence of a primal horde ruled over by a tyrannical father-figure. The subordinate males became jealous of the ruler's right to exclusive sexual activity with all the females in the horde. The males eventually revolted, killing their ruler and taking his wives. This was the gist of every myth of the dying god, according to Freud. The recurrent sacrifice of the sacred king was not merely the fertility magic of Frazer; it was the mythic prototype of the Oedipus Complex: every son desired to kill his own father and marry his own mother. The Phoenix's intermittent life is due in part to the guilt which patricide entails. He had to be short-lived to prevent excessive enjoyment of the privileges of the previously sacrificed sacred king.[111] Moreover, the image of the short-lived dying god is itself an outgrowth of copulation, the original fertility magic. Sexual reproduction necessarily involves male detumescence or loss of erection. The male who sees himself chiefly as an embodiment of the phallic principle, just as those who saw individual women primarily as walking wombs, cannot help but think of this physiological function as a loss, a defeat, a "little death" as Georges Bataille would put it.[112] Desire of the mother-goddess thus signified both the life of the one to come and one's own death. This is why nearly all myths in which men enter the mother-goddess to explore the underworld were understood as metaphors of the little death or loss of reason presumed to be the result of male orgasm. At any rate, it is not relevant to prove or to disprove the truth of Freud's hypothesis. Much more important is the fact that Freudianism, thoroughly colouring the mythography of the 1930s, succeeding in bleeding the primordial goddess of nearly all her original religious significance. She who was once the centre of religious life had become a bit player in the tragicomedy of male psychology.

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[109] Anatomy of My Universe, [trans. Meyer Schapiro] (New York: Curt Valentin, 1943), unpaginated, final paragraph. Fairly inaccessible in English, the whole text has been re-translated into French. See Le Rebelle, pp. 221 and 244, note 24.

[110] Stephen Potter and Laurens Sargent, Pedigree (New York: Taplinger, 1974), p. 176.

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[111] Totem and Taboo, pp. 152-3. Freud's hypothetical primal horde may have been the origin of Max Ernst's Horde paintings of 1927. See Schneede, pp. 92-3.

[112] First used in a lecture of 4 July, 1939 to "the College of Sociology," reprinted in Visions of Excess, p. 251.

An interesting example of another effect of this reductive cultural fashion on Masson was an essay published by Bataille in Documents in 1930. Ostensibly a short description of the chief characteristics of the Hindu goddess Kali, Bataille's paper explained only her fearsome aspect as the devourer of souls. (Kali is in fact also the same beneficent goddess as that appearing in most other matriarchal traditions.) The source of the reduction was a psychoanalytical paper on Kali and Castration Anxiety by an English writer, Claude Daly.[113] In 1938, Masson was invited to contribute a decorated mannekin to an international Surrealist exposition. His work, entitled Le Bâillon vert à bouche de pensée (fig. 31), was a classic example of redundancy, the repetition of the same message in different codes, so that the message cannot be mistaken. The figure's genitals were surrounded by tiger-eyes, like the severed heads strung around the neck of the sexual devourer Kali, and at her feet were little traps closed on phallic peppers which progressively lost their phallic rigidity, much to the artist's delight.[114] At the mouth of the figure was a pansy, in which the artist had discerned the forms of a copulating couple. A contemporary page from a sketchbook (fig. 32) shows that the "heart of a pansy"--that is, a veiled sexual embrace--was an equivalent of an "erotic temple." While the bodies of the goddesses in the prologue drawing and in Le mur métaphysique loosely took on the quasi-architectural character of the erotic temple, the mannekin explicitly condensed the original mythic significance of the erotic temple with elements of a Freudian reading of the promiscuous rites that took place there. In other words, the mannekin is like Kali, yet another manifestation of the castrating woman. The pansy in her mouth, because it connotes sexual intercourse, equates her mouth with her vagina, ensuring that the viewer reads it as a vagina dentata. This toothed orifice predated Freud as the mouth of Hell in religious custom, but the Austrian thinker made it an explicit source of castration anxiety. The Surrealist circle was thoroughly familiar with the concept. Max Ernst, for example, once told his son Jimmy:

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[113] Bataille's paper, "Kâlî," is reprinted in his Oeuvres complètes, ed. Michel Foucault (Paris: Gallimard, 1970), vol. I, pp. 243-4. Claude Daly's paper was "Hindu-Mythologie und Kastrationskomplex," Imago, 13 (1927), trans. P. Mendelssohn, pp. 145-198.

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[114] See Clébert, p. 61.

"All women have vaginas, but only in a few of them are they properly connected to their heads."[115] More pertinently, Man Ray's L'Etoile de Mer, a film of 1928 based on a poem by Robert Desnos, begins with the lines: "Women's teeth are objects so charming...that one ought to see them only in dreams or in the instant of love." The woman used to illustrate the point later appears as the formerly all-powerful vegetation goddess Cybele (a pun on the words si belle, so beautiful). Her priests had annually castrated themselves to revive the sacrificial magic of Attis, another version of the Phoenix-like son and lover.[116] The goddess is simultaneously desirable and threatening, a description which is equally applicable to Masson's mannekin. The bird cage around her head indicates both the walls of the erotic temple and a threat to the Phoenix, the Oedipal son who coveted his mother. Something of this is apparent in Masson's other goddesses: the prologue drawing shows a tiny repetition of the stylized bird in the lower left, trapped by a fragment of a maze or labyrinth. More emblematic still is a drawing from Mythologie de la nature (1939, fig. 33), in which a male figure enters the earth-mother's labyrinthine temple through a genital gate which bristles with spikes.

The original mystic meaning of the labyrinth was a journey into the otherworld and out again, in part a metaphor of sexual intercourse, like the sacred king's cyclic journeys into death and rebirth.[117] For Masson, Bataille, and their colleagues gathered around the review Acéphale, the labyrinth became a specifically male rallying cry to a new cult of dionysian excess.[118] The figure of the headless god contained the labyrinth within itself (fig. 34), indicating both that the descent into a little death was considered an exploration of the irrational component of the personality and that the netherworld, formerly the exclusive province of the female principle, had been appropriated, literally ingested, by the male. As we have seen in our discussion of Sade, the appropriation of that which is "other"--that is, the female is "other" to the male--had been described by Bataille as part of the processes leading to the determination of the sacred in everyday life. Almost all of the Surrealists held women to be somehow above normal humankind, but if Acéphale's appropriation of the sacred labyrinth is any example, then the Surrealist mythicization of women was predicated on the fallacy that women had no autonomous identity. Even Masson's least Freudian mother-goddess, based on medieval hermetic traditions, reveals the same prejudice when examined according to the principle of the "omnipotence of thought."

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[115] Quoted in Jimmy Ernst, p. 91. There are numerous other accounts of the father's disparaging attitude towards women (e.g., pp. 12, 13, 15, 76).

[116] Attis figures prominently in Frazer's Golden Bough, abridged ed. (1922), pp. 347-56, 405-7. See below, pp. 171-2.

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[117] Dorothy Norman, The Hero (New York: World, 1969), pp. 107-8.

[118] Masson, "Le soc de la charrue [Georges Bataille]," Le Rebelle, p. 72. Cf. Bataille's own "The Labyrinth," in Visions of Excess, pp. 171-7.

In 1938, Masson was inspired by Cabalistic and numerological writings to make a drawing entitled Number Five (fig. 35) for his Anatomy of My Universe. In the accompanying text, the artist observed simply that the science of numbers raises the mind to great heights, and most critics are inclined to leave it at that in the presumption that allusions to such elevating occult traditions are beyond examination.[119] What they fail to note is the contradiction in Masson's drawing, which only becomes clear when one acknowledges the Cabala's basic premise: all the world's ills stem from God's loss of contact with his female counterpart, the Shekina. It is essential to bring together the male and female cosmic principles, whether by sexual magic reflecting the orgiastic fertility rituals of earlier societies, or purely through symbols. The graphic sign of this mystic conjunction of equal male and female principles was the hexagram, the intersection of two identical triangles, the female's pointing downwards, the male's upwards. The sign is familiar to us now as the Star of David or Solomon's Seal, but it predated our traditions by centuries, first appearing in the context of Tantric Hinduism.[120] Having spread all over Europe, the device can even be found at the centre of some labyrinths in Christian cathedrals, reiterating the ceremonial significance of the maze as sexual congress.[121] Now, Masson's *Number Five* is quite clearly an image of sexual congress: the male representative of the dying god enters into the mother-goddess. Her headless body is once again a quasi-architectural structure, in this case with a gate made of great blocks forming a pentacle or pentagram. Masson's use of the five-pointed star instead of the proper hexagram is revealing, for the pentacle's original significance was exclusively female. It was originally the symbol of the Holy Virgin aspect of the earth-goddess Demeter, familiar to Masson as the central goddess in Bachofen's *Das Mutterrecht*. In Greece this virginal aspect was known as Kore; elsewhere can be found variations like Ceres, Ker, Cara, Kauri, and even Kali. Kore the virgin was thought to be hidden in the heart of mother-earth, just as her pentagonal symbol is hidden in the heart of an apple. The tradition of slicing an apple transversely to reveal the goddess, still practiced by gypsies,[122] was an attempt to unveil her sacred heart or her star of knowledge. Quite clearly, this led to the Judaeo-Christian forbidden fruit on the one hand and to the Cabalist's thirst for knowledge on the other.

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[119] The text accompanies the third plate of chapter one and is not included in Le Rebelle. An example of the failure of criticism to go beyond the seductive occult surface can be found in Lanchner, "André Masson: Origins and Development," in Rubin and Lanchner, pp. 155-7.

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[120] Carl Jung, *Man and His Symbols* (New York: Doubleday, 1964), p. 240; Herbert Silberer, *Hidden Symbolism of Alchemy and the Occult Arts* (New York: Dover, 1971), p. 197.

[121] Elizabeth Pepper and John Wilcock, *Magical and Mystical Sites* (New York: Harper and Row, 1977), p. 159.

[122] Pierre Derlon, *Secrets of the Gypsies* (New York: Ballantine, 1977), p. 157.

Masson, like the Cabalist, sought the knowledge of the goddess, but he could only envisage achieving it through dionysian or "acephalic" appropriation. The rationale for this appropriation was occult number theory: it was reasoned that five was composed of two and three, the first even and odd numbers after the one of godhead.[123] This in turn grew out of the hermetic tradition which lionized Hermes, the god who joined with his female counterpart Aphrodite to form the primal androgyne or Hermaphrodite.[124] The number five and the pentacle were thus altered in significance from the purely female to the androgynous, the sexually coupled. Why had occult traditions thus created a new code for a message already clear in the hexagram? It was because the standing male figure, as in Leonardo's Vitruvian Man, the Neoplatonists' Pentamorph, Masson's Acéphale and the male figure in his Number Five, could be inscribed within the five-pointed star. In 1929 Masson's friend Michel Leiris had written about the hermetic concept of the man of the microcosm or "small world", as he put it:

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[123] See Lanchner, p. 156.

[124] Robert Graves, The Greek Myths, I (New York: Penguin, 1955), p. 73.

> that is to say, man in his relations with the macrocosm or big world, that is to say the universe...man inscribed in a five-pointed star...as opposed to the six-pointed star...which is the sign of the Macrocosm.[125]

Leiris, then a dissident Surrealist like Masson and Bataille, nevertheless had based himself on a writer very dear to Breton, Cornelius Agrippa, whose original occult texts bury the role of the originally all-powerful goddess, just as Freud would do. The microcosm is man alone, and the occultist tries to unravel his relations not with woman but with the androgynous macrocosm. In other words, there is no room for an autonomous female element; moreover, it is an autonomous male that now replaces the goddess at the centre of the universe. Woman appears only as an inseparable component of the sexually coupled macrocosm wheeling about man.

Masson's picture and text confirm this reading: the drawing shows roughly half a woman's body, the vegetation of which puns on yet another exposed vagina dentata. Although she is placed to balance a similar male component, she also holds a pansy, which has lost its significance as the erotic temple and the equal sexual union that took place there. It is now merely a repetition of the man of the microcosm. Like Acéphale, this man has not accepted the omnipotent goddess as much as he has ingested or appropriated her. She has become a stepping stone to his union with the universe. There is thus an unwitting patriarchal corruption in the works that critics of Masson have called the most matriarchal.

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[125] "Notes sur deux figures microcosmiques des XIV^{e} et XV^{e} siecles," Documents, no. 1 (April 1929), pp. 48, 51.

The presumed elevation of the goddess, which Carol Christ has seen as desirable for women in our decade, was something of a fiction in the hands of Masson. To the extent that any work of art is meant to advocate behaviour--and here we must note that the prologue of Anatomy of My Universe implies this[126]--Masson's earth-goddesses offer two alternatives to women: the first is to fall in with the pro-natalist policies of the state, to become a mortal representation of the goddess, and to reproduce. The second is to forego the responsibility of the first and to use her sexual identity not for her own benefit but for that of men. Interestingly, this pair of equally negative alternatives differs very little from the state of affairs lamented by the feminists of 1918:

> The rights of women increase. But what is their great duty: to give birth, to give birth again, always to give birth....Should a woman refuse to give birth she no longer deserves her rights....The price of woman is the child. Childless by choice, she falls

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[126] Masson followed Nietzche in believing that hunger could not be satisfied with food seen only in dreams. Th implication is that something must be done with unsatisfied instinct. See Le Rebelle, p. 220. Freud maintained much the same thing in lecture 8 of The Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis, S.E., XV.

> to the rank of the prostitute, the whore whose organs are only instruments, obscene playthings, instead of remaining the venerable matrix of all the future centuries.[127]

Masson fully believed that erotic temples of the past were places of sacred prostitution, and his closest friends were not infrequent visitors to the contemporary brothels of Paris.[128] As a member of the Surrealist group, he was committed to a life lived according to the pleasure principle. This life, like that of the child, the insane or the presumed savage, was best pursued outside the restrictions of adult responsibility and bourgeois morality. Masson understood the sexual urge as structurally akin to hunger: neither drive could be satisfied in dream.[129] Sexual arousal, therefore, had to be dealt with by recourse to the sexually emancipated woman, a cultural entity which was much rarer in fact than the Surrealists had hoped.[130] Moreover, the decades between the Wars saw France struggling to maintain the status quo in the relations between the sexes. As the previous quotation indicated, free-loving women were automatically considered prostitutes. Since public concern for the welfare of prostitutes was entirely a matter of preserving male health,[131] it is not surprising that death and life, attributes of the goddess, were condensed with sexual subordination and the primacy of male sexual release, attributes of the whore. What then was the new myth promulgated here? It was that woman's natural identity was to serve men in repopulating France and that her cultural identity was to enable men to gain sexual access to a spiritual knowledge which was presumed to be asexual. This patriarchal conceit was obscured by a regressive primitivism which was thought to be revolutionary. Nevertheless, the principle of the omnipotence of thought reveals that art bypasses the intellect to manifest an accomplishment of desires. Masson's earth-goddess is therefore not that far from the whore at the right in Picasso's Demoiselles d'Avignon (1907), both in pose and in function. Both are essentially implements for dionysian self-expression and both carry the risk of death.[132] It is no surprise that the Surrealists were the first to recognize the significance of Picasso's masterwork,[133] one that has much less to do with formal innovation than with a primitivistic fallacy.

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[127] A neo-Malthusian text written by F. A. Doleris and J. Bouscatel, this is quoted in Mathilde Dubesset, et al., "Les munitionettes de la Seine," in Patrick Fridenson, ed., 1914-1919: L'Autre Front (Paris: Editions Ouvrières, 1977), p. 208.

[128] On his awareness of the sacred harlot, see his La Mémoire du monde (Geneva: Skira), pp. 19-23. On his friends' patronage of the brothel, see Michel Leiris, "De Bataille l'Impossible à l'impossible Documents," in Brisées (Paris: Mercure de France, 1966), pp. 256-66. Classicists Maria Shaw (University of Toronto) and David Wilson (University of Western Ontario) have pointed out to me the impossibility of proving that ancient temples were brothels.

[129] See note 126.

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[130] Masson was one of the thirty-two signatories of "Hands Off Love," a collective text ridiculing the bourgeois values revealed in the divorce proceedings of Charles Chaplin. The basic thrust of the declaration was that men should be allowed to pursue love free from the need to reproduce. To this end, women should be open to non-genital sexuality. James F. McMillan has written that the numbers of genuine, sexually emancipated women in the post-war era were very small. Only a few free-thinkers of Montparnasse could qualify. See the chapter "After the war: the durability of the double standard," in his Housewife or Harlot, pp. 163-77.

[131] Alain Corbin, Les Filles de Noce: misère sexuelle et prostitution, 19e et 20e siècles (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1978), pp. 491-493.

Much has been written on the question of primitivism in recent years, of course, most of it of great importance in illuminating formal changes and iconographical influences.[134] It is quite clear that the impulse to appropriate primitive culture was fundamentally romantic, predicated on the idealistic notion that what is "earlier" or "more natural" is necessarily "better". Now, Breton described Surrealism as the prehensile tail of

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[132] This is the gist of Leo Steinberg's "The Philosophical Brothel," in two parts: Art News, LXXI, no. 5 (September 1972), pp. 20-9, and LXXI, no. 6 (October 1972), pp. 38-47.

[133] Breton convinced Jacques Doucet to purchase it, and he immediately reproduced it in La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 4 (15 July 1925), p. 7, with a date of 1908. A thorough discussion is given in Elizabeth Cowling, "'Proudly we claim him as one of us': Breton, Picasso and the Surrealist Movement," Art History, VIII, no. 1 (March 1985), pp. 82-104.

[134] See Maurer, passim. Recently revised is Robert Goldwater's 1938 book Primitivism in Modern Art (London: Belknap Press of Harvard, 1986), pp. 216-224.

Romanticism,[135] which implies that the original movement grasped something which current literature on the subject does not. It would seem that the latter is insufficiently aggressive, unlike the former, for it ignores the historical and material conditions that led to primitivism in the first place. The story is far too complicated to develop here in detail, but a few comments are necessary to put things into some sort of alternative perspective. First of all, primitivism is not merely a matter of form but of cultural concepts. André Masson asserted as much when he told Evan Maurer that Oceanic artifacts were discovered "not for the ethnographers but for the world of culture."[136] Maurer interprets this to mean that Masson's interest was exclusively aesthetic. What this overlooks is the actual history of primitivism, which can be understood in two broad categories: chronological and cultural.[137] The latter maintains that additions to the presumed "natural" condition of mankind are deleterious--"more natural" is "better". Yet, formal innovation is at best a small component of this category. The other category, chronological primitivism, maintains that the "better" stages of historical development are those which occur early in the sequence: the Greek

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[135] "Second manifesto," p. 153. (See note 2).

[136] Maurer, p. 551.

[137] The following argument is built upon information given in George Boas, "Primitivism," in Philip P. Wiener, ed., Dictionary of the History of Ideas, III (New York: Scribner's Sons, 1973), pp. 577-598.

Golden Age is better than the Industrial Age, the primitive man is better than the modern man, the child is better than the adult. Each of these, however, is an illusion which is dispelled by direct acquaintance. The Greeks thought the Scythians were noble savages until they became familiar, just as the Romans found the Germans, and, more recently, the *encyclopédistes* found the North American Indian. The next model of the noble savage was the archetypal peasant that figured so prominently in Romanticism, while a subsequent model was the child. Underlying all of these is the same polarity that underlies misogyny: what is good is furthest from culture. If women are not "natural," they are not good enough for the practising Surrealist, who fancies himself as a variation on the theme of the noble savage. (Ernst played at being a shaman, while Masson identified Chateaubriand's novels of noble savages as his first inkling that literature could be art.[138]) And if a woman's most "natural" role is to be a mother, then the most logical noble savage to become is the child.

This perspective gives an unexpected twist to the theme of the earth-mother, which is usually seen only as an allusion to non-Western art forms. On the psychological plane alone are dozens of examples to be cited, ranging from the foetal visions of Dalí to the womb re-entries of

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[138] Maurer, p. 575; Clébert, p. 14. Further to Chateaubriand's influence on Masson, see Rosenthal, p. 93.

Masson.[139] What all of them seem to say is that the Surrealist, child that he is, needs someone to nurture, shelter, support and entertain him, all in the guise of maternal love. Joan Miró even went to the extent of inventing a sign for maternal love, a flame, which directly rhymes the shape of a mother's distended genitalia, rooted like an onion bulb _in_ the floor in _La famille_ (The Family), a drawing of 1924 (fig. 36). Not surprisingly, perhaps, the father seems capable of free movement _on_ the floor, whereas the mother is further locked into permanent position by a sinuous horizontal line which designates the interlocked arms of father, mother, and son.[140] This line loops where it intersects the flame of maternal love, while a jewelled pin in the form of an arrow penetrates _and_ fixes it in place, as if to say there is no alternative role for women. It would thus seem quite unlikely that Miró's presence is symbolized by the eye at the window, as William Rubin has suggested.[141] Instead, the artist is the child surrounded by his toys, one of which is a hobbyhorse which may have been inspired by the French translation of "Dada," itself an instance of chronological primitivism. This reading is supported by the mutually contradictory interpretations of both Jacques Dupin and Harold Rosenberg, for the former notes that Miró's art is essentially play, an early form of ritual, whereas the latter asserts that it is love, both social and sacred.[142] But does the child clearly distinguish between the two? Surely not, if Miró's contemporary painting La maternité (Maternity, fig. 37) is any indication, for the picture conflates play, love, nurturing, and awe in a manner which is closer to the genuinely primitive than any of Masson's rather contrived metaphors. Suckling, so to speak, at the breasts of a huge, abstracted earth-mother are two tiny children, each in the orant position, arms outstretched. Given that the position designates prayer or an attitude of awe, especially when represented in so hieratic a manner, it is clear that the children are worshipping the Great Mother as nurturer. Moreover, she simultaneously plays the role of a teeter-totter, rocking her nursing children back and forth. This kind of conflation is chronological primitivism at its best: Miró has thoroughly embraced the child-like, prelogical state of the genuine primitive tribesman. However, that he may have done so under the direct influence of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl's La Mentalité primitive of 1923 does not mean he was any the less a Surrealist, for Lévy-Bruhl had described the prelogical state of mind as a predecessor of objective chance, a mental state in which nothing was truly fortuitous.[143] Interestingly, this mental state is bound up with animistic conceptions, something which Miró himself recognized:

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[139] See, for example, Dalí, _The Unspeakable Confessions_ p. 61; and the untitled Masson drawing reproduced in Rubin, _Dada and Surrealist Art_, p. 330.

[140] See the useful legend in William Rubin, _Miró in the Collection of the Museum of Modern Art_ (New York: M.O.M.A., 1973), p. 28.

[141] Ibid., p. 27.

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[142] Jacques Dupin, "Plénitude et liberté du geste," XXe siècle, XLIII (1973), pp. 7-14; Harold Rosenberg, "Miró's fertile fields," Art International, XVII, no. 6 (Summer 1973), pp. 16-19.

> Each grain of dust possesses a marvelous soul. But to understand this, it is necessary to rediscover the religious and magic sense of things--that of the primitive peoples.[144]

Of course, the term "animism" now has little anthropological significance, chiefly because of its vagueness. It is, however, still used in some studies of the psychology of young children.[145]

Miró, like a child, saw the nourishing mother as an omnipotent deity, an observation which leaves two avenues of interpretation open to us: first, if the artist saw all women this way, then his mentality would have been a symptom of a development arrested at "the infantile stage"--importantly, something which Breton acknowledged even as he described the artist as potentially "the most 'Surrealist' of us all."[146] Breton's comment unwittingly makes it clear that the first avenue, biographical interpretation, is intimately intertwined with a second, the cultural fashion of Surrealism. In other words, Miró may really have been childlike, but it is more important that he found himself at home with artists who only pretended to be so. With the image of the nourishing mother in mind, a case in point is Hans Bellmer, who, like Masson, Man Ray and Max Ernst,[147] was fascinated by the image of Woman as little more than a multiplicity of breasts (fig. 38). One might think an inverted cone of severed breasts to be a relatively harmless nurture-idol, especially in light of Bellmer's clear understanding of some of the principles of Lévy-Bruhl.[148] Unfortunately, however, the German artist took pains to make clear that objects of this sort were not to be confused with such deities as the famous Diana of Ephesus, whose dozens of breasts were sources of nourishment to all the creatures of the world.[149] Bellmer's many-breasted being is instead

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[143] Sidra Stich, Joan Miró: The Development of a Sign Language (St. Louis, Missouri: Washington University Gallery of Art, 19 March-27 April 1980), pp. 18, 60, note 6.

[144] In conversation with Georges Duthuit, "Ou allez-vous Miró?", Cahiers d'art, XI, no. 8-10 (1936), p. 262.

[145] Maurice Freedman, s.v. "Animism," in A. Bullock and O. Stallybrass, eds., The Fontana Dictionary of Modern Thought (London: Fontana, 1977), p. 25.

[146] Le Surréalisme et la peinture, pp. 70 and 37, respectively.

> the practical fusion of the natural and the imagined. As the gardener obliges the box-tree to live in the form of a

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[147] Masson's earth-mothers are frequently lactating (see fig. 28); Man Ray multiplied breasts in an untitled photo, (fig. 78); and Ernst's _Robing of the Bride_ (1939) features a multiply breasted male (!) figure picking its nose (Schneede, fig. 328).

[148] Bellmer, "L'Anatomie de l'image," in _Obliques, numéro spécial: Bellmer_, p. 133.

[149] See Erich Neumann, _The Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype_ (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), plate 35.

> sphere, a cone, a cube, man imposes upon the image of woman his rudimentary certainties, the geometric and algebraic habits of his thought.[150]

With this "gardener", we are returned to the fundamental problem of earth-mother and agriculture, are we not?

Out of its original context, Bellmer's passage is almost humorous: his stream of thought is shallow indeed if he expects his reader to concur with his assessment of women as complacent, vegetative recipients of a gardener's willfullness. However, though the stream is not deep, it has a jagged floor, for the passage follows a description of sadomasochistic images of bound women, a phenomenon discussed in more detail in chapter III. It seems clear, then, that Bellmer's primitivism is not innocent, as Miró's is often presumed to be; rather, it is a learned justification of an attitude which skirts the realm of pathology. The two avenues of interpretation suggest that Surrealists might have adopted ambivalent positions regarding the benevolent mother, the spirit of genuine play or that of play-acting. The boundaries between them grow increasingly indistinct.

Like actors, many Surrealists tried their hands at the same roles. As the primitive or the child, the artists of the 1930s fashioned dozens of images of female procreators, many of them headless. It would be pointless to go on listing examples, except insofar as the rhetoric adopted by some of the players has been influenced by primitivist fallacies which lead in a new direction. For example, Hans Arp's various Human Concretions suggest an irrational fecundity which explains their odd similarities to the distortions of the Venus of Willendorf.[151] The rhetoric accompanying these works is full of allusions to "the cave age" and "nature's great workshop," and is thus no different in kind from the fallacy inherent in the assertions of the photographer Brassai, who maintained that Parisian graffiti was spiritually bound to cave-painting.[152] Once again, we are presented with the presumption that the "primitive," the "natural," and the "spontaneous" are "better". In an age which acknowledges the relativity of all phenomena, this self-assurance smacks of the absolute and is therefore indefensible. It returns us to the dionysian world of the irrational--"Reason has robbed man of his roots," writes Arp.[153] And of course, one could use similar words to justify moral irresponsibility or lack of critical discipline. Moreover, the primitivism of the modern era was never a thing-in-itself; it is symptomatic of a context of increasing industrialization and shifting women's roles. In a word, artists sought to escape their own civilization by regressing to the presumed artistic, religious, and sexual freedom of another. At the same time, the pictorial treatment of women "slides down the evolutionary ladder," to paraphrase Robert Rosenblum.[154] If a woman's role is to play nature to a man's culture, then when that man foresakes culture in order to take over woman's role of nature, he displaces her downwards. There is nothing left for her to be but a disembodied vulva, as in Brassai's graffiti, or a glob of fertile protoplasm, as in the amoebic sculptures of Arp--themselves foreshadowed by Brassai's strikingly similar photographs of headless nudes.[155] There is nothing left for her to be, except perhaps the very cave into which some of these artists sought to escape.

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[150] Bellmer, "L'anatomie de l'image," p. 132.

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[151] One of Arp's Concretions is reproduced alongside related works in Rubin, Dada and Surrealist Art, fig. 242. For fertility figurines of the Willendorf type, see Neumann, plate 1.

[152] See the selections from the prolific writings of Arp in Herschel B. Chipp, ed., Theories of Modern Art (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), p. 390. The Brassai article is "Du mur des cavernes au mur d'usine," Minotaure, no. 3-4 (12 December 1933), pp. 6-7.

[153] In Chipp, p. 391.

If caves were occasionally the original sites of pagan religious rituals, they would have been synonymous with the womb of the earth-goddess. In Sanskrit, in fact, the word for sanctuary, garbha-grha, also means womb.[156] Clearly, the ecstatic reunion with the goddess of old became for some a rather shallow metaphor for the loss of reason that accompanied sexual intercourse, especially given that no real woman was permitted to be anything other than the archetypal Woman. It requires no great leap of faith to realize that such an easy association of ideas compromises nearly all "underground" cultural manifestations in the Surrealist era, for it still permits women no freedom to form an identity aside from that bequeathed to her by history. One illustration of the Surrealist manner of tapping into this history should suffice: in Man Ray's film _L'Etoile de mer_, the most famous of the cave-goddesses of Western culture is demeaned. Cybele, originally an all-powerful cave-dweller whose priests emasculated themselves in emulation of her sacrificial son Attis, appears as a contemporary Parisian woman trying her best to look threatening in a stagey Phrygian cap. Poetic captions pun on her name--_Cybèle_, _si belle_--while her image is intercut with a suggestively moving pair of scissors, among other things. In a truly pagan society, Cybele would have evoked both joy and fear, but what the film reveals is at best a clever bit of play-acting predicated on some fashionable allusions to women as castrators.

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[154] "Picasso and the Anatomy of Eroticism," in T. Bowie and C. V. Christenson, eds., Studies in Erotic Art (New York: Basic, 1970), pp. 339-40, 348. Of related interest is Ron Johnson, "The Demoiselles d'Avignon and Dionysian Destruction," Arts, LV, no. 2 (October 1980), pp. 94-101.

[155] These are illustrations to Maurice Reynal's "Variétés du corps humain," Minotaure, no. 1 (February 1933), pp. 41-44. Arp's concretions do not appear in Minotaure until no. 10, (Winter 1937), p. 33.

[156] Joseph Campbell, The Masks of God: Creative Mythology (New York: Viking, 1970), p. 168.

In _Totem and Taboo_, Freud identified the Cybele-Attis relationship as related to both a son's Oedipal fixation with his mother and the castration anxiety that would result. In almost the same breath, the psychoanalyst suggested that cutting of the hair bore the same connotations.[157] The Surrealists would instantly have made the connection between Cybele and the Samson-and-Delilah theme so common in the literature of the nineteenth century. The archetypal *femme fatale* removed the hero's source of strength--his hair, still associated with virility, as television advertisements make clear[158]--in order to betray him to others intent on gouging out his eyes --yet another castration symbol.[159] Of course, the creators of these new myths would have been completely unaware that the stories of Cybele and Delilah were compromised by patriarchal culture even before the Surrealist era. According to Frazer, Cybele was once superior even to Zeus, and she was said to control the elements simply by braiding or releasing her hair.[160] But Freud was quite indifferent to her omnipotence, as was Man Ray, who covered her tresses with an awkward stage prop. Delilah, meanwhile, had been even more unjustly maligned, for she was not originally a minor character in a biblical epic but an omnipotent earth-goddess whose ceaseless rotation deprived the solar god Shams-on of his strength by obscuring his rays--that is, his "hair."[161] Even Masson's metaphors are preferable to bathetic reductions on such a scale.

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[157] See the *Standard Edition*, XIII, p. 153 and note.

[158] Philip Rawson, Erotic Art of the East (New York: Putnam's, 1968), p. 25; Richard Payne Knight, *The Symbolical Language of Ancient Art and Mythology* (New York: Bouton, 1892), p. 79.

[159] Patrick Blade, *Femme fatale* (London: Ash and Grant, 1979), p. 7; Dijkstra, pp. 375-6.

[160] Frazer, *Golden Bough*, abridged ed. (1922), p. 273.

d) Alchemy and Androgynes

This chapter began by alluding to the Surrealist fondness for flea-markets. Amongst the discarded odds and ends that could be found there, the Surrealist would surely find a few basic materials which could be recombined into unfamiliar and evocative images. Curiously, rummaging in the junk-heaps of Paris comes to mind again in the light--or perhaps, the darkness--of the cave discussed above, for the Surrealist escaped his civilization not by entering a real cave, but a metaphorical one. The analogy is a simple one that can best be understood by alluding to Breton's official approval of the exploitation of the occult in the "Second Manifesto":

> I would appreciate your noting the remarkable analogy...between the Surrealist efforts and those of the alchemist: the philosopher's stone is nothing more or less than that which was to enable man's imagination to take a stunning revenge on all things.... And let it be clearly understood that we are not talking about a simple regrouping of words or a capricious redistribution of visual images, but of the re-creation of a state which can only be fairly compared to that of madness (pp. 174-5).

Inasmuch as many alchemical tales begin with a search for primal matter underground,[162] the Surrealist's entry into the flea-market is equivalent to the alchemist's entry into the cavern. Moreover, we have already seen that the descent into the earth is a metaphor of the "madness"--the loss of reason--that accompanied human sexuality in its religious guise as reunion with the earth-goddess. All the more interesting is that the Surrealists' principle source of information on alchemy, an illustrated compendium of the occult published by one Emile-Angelo Grillot de Givry in 1929, explicitly associated caves, primal matter, infants, and lactating goddesses.[163] Breton thus advocated a similarly complicated conflation of practices aimed at reconstructing the world to correspond more closely to repressed desire. Now, this is certainly not the goal of alchemy, which was about neither instinctual desires nor the intuitive chemistry of a technologically unsophisticated era. By 1914, alchemy had been described as a fundamentally psychological phenomenon, symbolically expressing the alchemist's quest for self-knowledge and moral perfection.[164] By appropriating the rich tradition of alchemy and fusing it with his personal vision of human freedom from repression, Breton was able to conceal for years the subordinate role of women.

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[161] Silberer, p. 97.

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[162] M. E. Warlick, "Max Ernst's Alchemical Novel 'Une Semaine de Bonté'," Art Journal, XLVI, no. 1 (Spring, 1987), p. 65. Warlick's article thoroughly documents the sources of alchemical imagery available to the Surrealists.

[163] E. A. Grillot de Givry, Le Musée des sorciers, mages et alchimistes (Paris: Librairie de France), 1929. I have used the unadulterated English edition, A Pictorial Anthology of Witchcraft, Magic and Alchemy, trans. J. Courtenay Locke (London: Harrap, 1931), pp. 338-40. It is indisputable that the Surrealists knew the work. Robert Desnos alluded to it in "Le Mystère d'Abraham juif," Documents, no. 5 (1929), pp. 233-239, an article which Breton remarks upon in the "Second manifesto," p. 174, note.

Alchemical stories and images are typically abstruse and elaborate, but the basic structure of the symbolism is always the same: the alchemist finds base or primal material, separates it violently into its constituent properties--the active, male, solar sulphur and the passive (!), female, lunar mercury--allows them to putrefy or blacken, purifies or whitens them through ablution, and reunites them or reddens them through conjunction. All of this, of course, is presumably done so that the adept can reap three types of benefit: on the physical plane, he learns the practical processes of metallurgy; on the psychological plane, he purifies himself of his baser instincts and reconciles the disparate components of his psyche; and on the spiritual plane, he glimpses divine order.[165] Breton's era, evidently, forsook the third plane but retained the second one in an attempt to understand how the active (conscious, "male") components of the psyche interact or achieve union with the passive

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[164] Herbert Silberer, Probleme der Mystik und Ihrer Symbolik (Vienna: Heller, 1914) may have been known by Max Ernst. See Warlick, p. 73, note 19.

[165] Ibid., p. 71.

(unconscious, "female") ones.[166] But as Mircea Eliade has pointed out, to favour the second plane over the first one, that of metallurgy, is to miss part of the unintended cultural significance of alchemy: the natural gestation of the earth-goddess, manifest in the production of precious stones, could be improved upon--sped up and refined by the intervention of men.[167] Quite simply, behind all of the recondite allegories of alchemy and their Surrealist heirs is another patriarchal attitude that is structurally akin to agriculture: nature can be perfected. This is Breton's "stunning revenge on all things."

The alchemical images of Surrealism exist in the hundreds. This is not surprising, given that the red stage of conjunction was usually symbolized as some form of coitus. Of course, we know the Surrealists saw coitus everywhere, especially in flea-market images like Lautréamont's famous simile regarding the chance encounter of an umbrella and a sewing-machine.[168] Moreover, coitus is the proper state of the androgyne, which we can define as the final goal of the alchemical work--the completed being perfected through the union of the sexes. And yet, there is no real union of the sexes at all, for the ostensibly female component of the psyche is just a conventional description of those psychic characteristics which are least concerned with cultural affairs, the presumed domain of men. If the alchemical Surrealist emphatically asserts that his search is for union with the perfect Woman, then he is allegorizing desire; meanwhile, the completion that he seeks is not that of the spirit, but of unfulfilled libidinal impulses. And this is why it would be redundant to analyse a selection of alchemical images *in extenso*. Valuable though that enterprise is,[169] it fails to answer one basic question: why revive deliberately obscure allegorization of theological principles in the twentieth century when the conditions for its necessity--freedom from harassment by the Inquisition[170]--have long since passed? There are at least three ways of responding to this question: first, Surrealism was the heir to a huge tradition of nineteenth-century occultism used as a weapon in the revolt against the bourgeoisie.[171] Second, Breton was temperamentally indisposed to obvious sexuality and preferred the indirect approach, which he called the "érotique-voilée," or veiled eroticism.[172] Third, the Surrealist revolution had begun with an open invitation: "We are on the eve of a Revolution.... You can take part in it,"[173] which led to its defilement by popularity, so to speak. Breton responded by following the example set by the Monas Hieroglyphica of John Dee: "Here the vulgar eye will see only obscurity and will despair considerably" (see note 108). In the "Second Manifesto," therefore, Breton asserted:

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[166] Certainly this is the gist of C. G. Jung's lengthy Psychologie und Alchemie (Zurich: Rascher, 1944). For a note on Jung's debt to Silberer, see Warlick, p. 73, note 68.

[167] Mircea Eliade, The Forge and the Crucible, trans. S. Corrin (New York: Harper, 1962), pp. 47, 75, 148, and elsewhere.

[168] The famous simile is discussed in chapter III, but it should be noted that its sexual significance was taken for granted in André Breton's "L'Objet fantôme," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 3 (December 1931), p. 21.

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[169] Virtually all general studies of note have some commentary on this issue. More specialized studies include Michel Carrouges, "Le surréalisme et l'occultisme," *Cahiers d'Hermès*, no. 2 (1947), pp. 194-218; N. S. Divort, "La Grande Déesse dans la poésie surréaliste" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of British Columbia, 1977); S. M. V. Goodman, "Surrealism between East and West" (Ph.D. dissertation, Wayne State University, 1977); Robert Kanters, "Esotérisme et surréalisme," *Mélusine*, II (1981), pp. 11-21; and André Lebois, "Surréalisme, occultisme et amour," in his *L'Occultisme et L'Amour* (Paris: Sodi, 1969), pp. 219-239.

[170] See Barbara Walker, s.v. "Alchemy" and "Inquisition," *The Woman's Encyclopedia*, pp. 18-22 and 436-449, respectively.

> The approval of the public is to be avoided like the plague. It is absolutely essential to keep the public from entering....I ASK FOR THE PROFOUND, THE VERITABLE OCCULTATION OF SURREALISM (pp. 177-178).

In a sense, Breton asked that artists use obscure allegories to purify (alchemically) Surrealism itself. It is interesting that most of the female Surrealists appeared on the scene after this declaration, as if they were assembling to assist in a great conjunction. Yet with few exceptions, they were not themselves alchemists. Just as medieval authorities ignored male alchemists but persecuted female ones as witches,[174] male Surrealists were quite indifferent to their companions' self-actualization. Indeed, the archetypal Woman became La Sorcière, the sorceress.

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[171] Eliade, Occultism, Witchcraft and Cultural Fashions, p. 52. See also the preceding discussion in part a) of this chapter.

[172] "La beauté sera convulsive," Minotaure, no. 5 (February 1934), pp. 9-16.

[173] Anonymous (the directors were then Pierre Naville and Benjamin Péret), untitled notice, La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1 (1 December, 1924), inside front cover.

Almost certainly, the witch of the Surrealists was influenced by the same sources that brought alchemy into the light of the modern era. Grillot de Givry's book alone recounts more Sabbath scenes, witches raising storms, and the like than can be pursued in this context. A few brief allusions will suffice to make the point: first is Grillot's illustration of a witch "milking" the handle of an axe.[175] The rather obvious Freudian reading of manual sexual stimulation of a weapon-like phallus is quite in keeping with the interpretation of one of Ernst's collages in Chapter III (pp. 208-9): Woman's only power over men is sexual--seduction. A second illustration has a more direct Surrealist equivalent: a possessed woman throws herself to the floor and attempts to throw herself out the window.[176] This corresponds quite clearly to the Surrealist fascination with hysteria, discussed in Chapter I. A third example is Grillot's exposition of trances and clairvoyance, ubiquitous in early Surrealism.[177] These three instances present three characteristics which were desirable in the sorceress: sexual activity chiefly practised for the satisfaction of the male, the exacerbated sexual sensibility and irrationality of the mentally ill, and the mediumistic ability to see into the depths of the unconscious. Such a woman, wrote Breton, is like "Michelet's young sorceress with the moors in her glance."[178] This is an illuminating allusion, for the nineteenth-century French historian Jules Michelet had written a book specifically about the history of witches. La Sorcière, originally published in 1862, is without doubt Michelet's most poetic book, even including an approximation of blank verse.[179] The witch is described as a mediator between an equally untenable Christianity and materialism, and she passes through three phases of development which correspond to three of the manifestations of women in Surrealism, two of which we have already discussed indirectly. Michelet first describes the witch as appearing in the feudal context of castles and fiefdoms in the thirteenth century.[180] She turns to a type of nature-magic as an escape from various types of oppression, including that of the Church. Now, Breton's fascination with castles haunted by legendary females is notorious. The appearance of the mermaid-like Mélusine in his novels is sufficient testimony to this fact, for Mélusine was condemned to haunt the walls of her castle at Lusignan after her unknowing husband saw her true beast-body in the bath.[181] There is no shortage of Surrealist mermaids to cite in the visual arts, either. One of the most well-known can be seen in Magritte's L'invention collective of 1935, in which a mermaid lying on a beach is simply turned upside-down, so that what we see is a routinely painted fish-head gracing the body of a nude woman from the waist up.[182] More interesting, however, is Man Ray's drawing Les Tours d'Eliane (reproduced and discussed in chapter IV), where the interrelated notions of woman as passage, shelter and haunted castle are fused with a rudimentary Freudian pun. Michelet's second manifestation of the witch is the medecine woman,[183] a role that was immediately appropriated by male alchemists. The third manifestation was the female participant in the Black Mass,[184] which we have already described in this chapter. What is common to all of these manifestations, for Michelet as for the Surrealist, is that the sorceress may have been superior to men in every way, but she still needed to be "morally and intellectually fertilized."[185] We still have not escaped the agricultural metaphor.

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[174] Walker, "Alchemy," The Woman's Encyclopedia, p. 18.

[175] Grillot de Givry, p. 156. Dozens of other examples could be cited: Hands of Glory (fig. 155) appear in Masson's stage designs for Cervantes' Numance (1937); sacred or flaming hearts (p. 214) can be found in a number of Masson and Miro works; eviscerations (figs. 197-8, 203) are used in Ernst's Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis (1923, fig. 90). Such correspondences could be multiplied almost endlessly. For a published example, see Salvador Dalí (with Pontus Hulten), "L'énigme de Salvador Dalí," XXe siècle, XXXVI, no. 43 (December, 1974), pp. 92-5.

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[176] Grillot de Givry, pp. 129-130. See also Masson and Loring, pp. 14, 176f, notes 13-14.

[177] Ibid., pp. 325-326. Compare Breton's "Le Message automatique," pp. 55-65.

[178] Arcane 17 (Paris: Sagittaire, 1947), p. 95.

[179] Originally published in Paris by Lucien Refort, the book is now available in two volumes from Paris: Didier, 1952-6.

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[180] La Sorcière, I, pp. 37, 56, 59, 105-107.

[181] Carrouges, Basic Concepts, pp. 29-33, 61-64, is a thorough discussion of the castle theme in Breton. On Mélusine specifically, see Pascaline Mourier-Casile, "Mélusine ou la triple en phase: Fée, Lilith, Phé dans Arcane 17," Mélusine, II (1981), pp. 175-202. Of more general interest is Robert Bréchon, "Le mythe de la fée Mélusine," Obliques, no. 14-15 (1977), pp. 33-38.

Other requirements of the sorceress were that she be childlike and fairy-like. The Surrealists gave specific names to each of these states: the femme-enfant and the femme-féerique.[186] The pictorial way in which these states were fused with the sorceress and ultimately with alchemy is well represented by a painting by Victor Brauner, La pierre philosophale (the Philosopher's Stone, fig. 39). Painted in 1940, in Brauner's so-called "period of the chimeras" or of "the twilights,"[187] the picture shows a synthetic sorceress in a veil of fairy-like light, while the innocence with which she shuts her eyes and straddles a probing branch indicates her child-like nature. She stands in an earthen room--a cave of sorts, given the sombre colours and the coarse arch at the right. A small griffin-like creature stands guard atop the philosopher's stone itself. The latter is a crystal which radiates a muddy brown light that permeates the whole scene. Given that both the stone and the sorceress are radiant and rest in the branches of a floating tree--a standard alchemical device[188] --then the stone and the woman are of the same nature. To use an appropriately alchemical image, what this boils down to is that the sorceress can become, like the stone, a catalyst of the purification of men, if only she is sufficiently childlike to subordinate herself to them. Through women, in other words, men are enabled to take "a stunning revenge on all things."

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[182] This may have something to do with Magritte's later text of the same title, which proclaims absolute opposition to conventional myths, among other things. See "(Pour L'Invention collective) (1939)," in his Ecrits complets, p. 135. The painting is reproduced in Gablik, fig. 94. Another, more conventional, mermaid can be found in the same volume, L'univers interdit (1943), fig. 125.

[183] La Sorcière, I, pp. 111-112, 121.

[184] Ibid., I, pp. 130-146; II, p. 4.

[185] This paraphrases Michelet's L'Amour, 4th ed. (Paris: Hachette, 1859), pp. 166, 174, 178. See Oscar A. Haac, Jules Michelet (Boston: Twayne, 1982), pp. 117-122. Michelet's position on women in general was conservative, directed at strengthening the moral fibre of the nation. See Jeanne Calo, La Création de la femme chez Michelet (Paris: Nizet, 1975).

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[186] See Gauthier, pp. 109-114: "To wish that a woman remain a child is to wish that she remain dependent (p. 111)." Benayoun disagrees, pp. 105-123.

[187] Pierre, L'univers surréaliste, p. 304. Pierre describes the picture as "seductive but a little superficial."

[188] Warlick, fig. 1.

Inasmuch as the Surrealist object also takes revenge on the conventional meanings of things, the art of assemblage is a precise analogue of alchemy. After all, the flea-market was a source of base materials which could be isolated from their impure contexts and given new meanings through conjunction or juxtaposition. To achieve the metaphorical sexual union of *things*, the artist violently stripped them of their usual functions. Since the articles in the flea-market were most often mass-produced, this procedure entailed stripping them of their public significance. It was thus not only "the approval of the public" which was "to be avoided like the plague," but also public meaning. The Surrealist, like the alchemist, performs an operation on himself--remember, the "female" with which the "male" is androgynously united is not external to the male alchemist, but is his inferior, non-cultural self. The women involved, like the flea-market finds, are merely fleshy conveniences invested with private meanings.

The Surrealists were well aware of the presumably "holy" significance of alchemy and its full realization in the androgyne; not only did they know it from the occult literature already mentioned, but also from numerous articles in *Cahiers d'art* and *Minotaure* that dealt with psychoanalysis, eastern religions, and primitive societies.[189] The most important of these was Albert Béguin's "L'Androgyne," which traced the myth from its origins in Plato's Symposium through Gnostic mysticism and other medieval manifestations to the seventeenth-century writings of Jakob Boehme.[190] Beguin's article was in no sense an analysis or explanation of the myth, but simply a history with a brief discussion of the theme as it appears in Balzac's Seraphita. He concluded, however, with the interesting observation that the myth is one of high idealism--man in search of the lost Unity that lies beyond "ethnic or social adherences."[191] It is not surprising, then, that a mixture of the occult with chronological primitivism would be appealing to the Surrealist mentality. It is also not surprising that the "holy" character of the myth is thoroughly compromised by Surrealist conflation, which is the ideologically active arm whose "aesthetic" counterpart goes under the name of juxtaposition.

Just as the making of Surrealist objects reveals private meanings, so does the way in which Surrealists relate ideas that have been violently torn from their original contexts. Max Ernst was particularly adept at using alchemical imagery in this meta-alchemical procedure, as it were. His collage-novels are liberally seasoned with allusions to primal matter, to putrefaction--often taking a rather obvious, sadistic form--and to the other stages of alchemical transmutation. His painting of 1923, Les Hommes n'en sauront rien (Of This Men Shall Know Nothing), has long been known to have borrowed occult ideas and to have fused them with psychoanalytic preoccupations which corrupted the sense of the original themes.[192] "Oedipus" (fig. 40), one of the collages in his Une Semaine de Bonté of 1934, indicates to what extent the androgynous union of the primal couple is in fact a stage in the development of a "superior" male at the expense of a disposable female. Ernst has superimposed part of a female torso onto a male body, while the bird's head that seems to spring forcibly from the man's shoulders makes it clear that we are in the presence of the artist's avian alter-ego, Loplop, the Superior of the birds. Warlick links this image directly to the alchemical androgyne but fails to explain the cringing female figure at the left of the collage.[193] This is a serious omission, for it does not acknowledge the extent to which Surrealist conflation is a waking form of Freudian condensation, manipulated in order to subvert the normal run of events. Condensation was familiar to Surrealists and other readers of Freud as the partial fusion of images or ideas which occurred particularly in dreams and which produced a characteristic type of distortion. A famous example is the word "alcoholidays," which needs no explanation in the era of the drunk driver.[194] For our purposes, the condensation itself is of less interest than the distortion produced. First of all, it must be noted that Ernst's Loplop is an androgynous conflation that the artist himself recognized on his deathbed as sheer invention --a good part of which was not his own, but that of anxious writers.[195] However, it is indisputable that the artist began the myth-making when he wrote that the birth of a younger sister coincided with the death of a pet cockatoo.[196] Whether or not this really happened--and the deathbed revelation suggests it did not--Ernst was clearly trying to fuse the type of traumatic childhood incident found in Freud's writings with his primitivistic, shamanistic inclinations on the one hand, and with his occult interests on the other.[197] To these, Ernst appended Freud's famous interpretation of Daniel Paul Schreber's fantasy of being transformed into a woman. This was, according to the psychoanalyst, a veiled castration complex,[198] which explains why Ernst would make use of an obviously dismayed principal figure in "Oedipus," especially considering the fallen, phallic candle and perhaps even the moth at the lower left, which is pinned into a display case over which an unseen hand is pouring excelsior. If any androgynous wholeness is later achieved by Loplop, then it is a disguise for male self-sufficiency at best.[199] But then, what else might we expect from one who "seemed always apprehensive that the end result of emotional involvements was a detestable prison"--as Jimmy Ernst wrote of his more famous father.[200] Moreover, Jimmy described his father in the same breath as one whose inner person was unapproachable, especially by women. They, in turn, would experience terror at the barrier of his aloof personality. "Oedipus" shows a strikingly similar and saddening cycle of anxiety and perturbation.

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[189] See the brief survey in Robert Knott, "The Myth of the Androgyne," Artforum, XIV, no. 3 (November 1975), pp. 38-45.

[190] Albert Béguin, "L'Androgyne," Minotaure, no. 11 (May 1938), pp. 10-13, 66.

[191] Ibid., p. 66.

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[192] Geoffrey Hinton, "Max Ernst: Les Hommes n'en sauront rien," Burlington Magazine, CXVII, no. 866 (May 1975), pp. 292-299.

[193] Warlick, p. 68.

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[194] Condensation is defined in lecture 10 of the Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (1916-17), the 1922 French translation of which was an important part of the original Surrealist centrale, according to André Masson. See chapter I, note 40.

[195] Jimmy Ernst, p. 262.

[196] "Some data on the youth of M.E., as told by himself," in Beyond Painting, pp. 26-29.

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[197] The most thorough discussion is Spies, Loplop, passim. Spies agrees that Ernst was fascinated by the androgyne (p. 91), but he concludes that Loplop is the artist's superego (p. 80).

[198] See the full discussion in Hinton, passim.

[199] Cf. Bert M. P. Leefmans, "Schnabelmax, Loplop, and 'La Nudité de la femme': consideration of a symbol," Dada/Surrealism, no. 9 (1979-80), p. 46.

[200] Jimmy Ernst, p. 9.

The Surrealist, then, in spite of his adoration of women, prefers to be left undistracted, alone. Rosalind Krauss recognized this as one of the reasons for Ernst's fascination with the unpopulated vistas of de Chirico: "a solitary consciousness constructs a world for itself and having done so, peoples it and manipulates its inhabitants."[201] This is precisely what happens, not only in the classic Surrealist barren plain,[202] but also in Surrealist alchemy, objects, and women. Inasmuch as all Surrealism is meta-alchemy, it is largely solipsistic. The reason for this is directly linked to the psychological roots of the Surrealist conceptions of self-improvement and world-transformation. The moral perfection sought by the Surrealist was inextricably bound up with desire and the pleasure principle, as well as with ways to overcome the societal inhibitions preventing regression to infantile levels of self-satisfaction. This is to say that a desire had to be accommodated, if not in reality, then in "surreality," where imaginative intervention could more easily circumnavigate bourgeois restrictions. When Freud first described the pleasure principle, man appeared quite isolated, driven to satisfy desire through relationships with women, often quite temporary. Sexual relations, even in love and marriage, were thought of as largely on the level of all other human relations in the marketplace. Freud recognized that his theory already tended towards solipsism, and he sought to improve it by developing an all-embracing Eros which transcended mere sexuality and pleasure in a vision of unification and integration that is almost mystical.[203] Ironically, however, Freud moved towards a thesis in which some repression of desire would be a good price to pay for an orderly society.[204] This, of course, was anathema to Breton and his associates, whose advocacy of complete personal liberation thus seems all the more solipsistic. One might even go so far as to replace "solipsistic" with "self-infatuated" or "narcissistic." And of course, group narcissism has been known to exist, especially in circumstances which are politically exacerbated and accompanied by propaganda designed not to convert the uninitiated, but to reinforce the feelings of the extant membership.[205] Thus, we are not surprised that Breton would write: "The approval of the public is to be avoided like the plague."

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[201] "Max Ernst: speculations provoked by an exhibition," Artforum, XI, no. 9 (May 1973), p. 39.

[202] Cf. Nicholas J. Capasso, "Salvador Dalí and the Barren Plain: A Phenomenological Analysis of a Surrealist Landscape Environment," Arts, LX, no. 10 (Summer 1986), pp. 72-83.

This chapter began with an assertion that Surrealist meaning is unspecific and flexible. Still, a flexible thing will break if it is bent far enough. Behind the Surrealist appropriation of myth and the occult lies an unspecific set of meanings, to be sure, but they are like the uncertain waters rippling within a single reservoir of connotations--a reservoir whose purity was guarded most carefully. Moreover, this reservoir--like the alchemical primal matter, the flea-market find, and the very structure of this chapter itself--must be rigorously disassembled and manipulated in order to get at the heart of the matter. This heart, like the dial of a phosphorescent clock, is all the harder to see when it is looked at directly, but it is nonetheless there. It is hiding behind a mask of unutterableness, yet its real name is power, for all folkloric phenomena are language, and "Language has been given to man so that he may make Surrealist use of it" (Breton, "Manifesto," p. 32). The imagery and themes of myth and the occult were absorbed by Surrealism, digested by it, and eliminated as meta- alchemical alloys which validate condensation as an "aesthetic" methodology,[206] while a screen of sanctimony obscures the xenophobic character of the whole undertaking. The Surrealist woman--whether altar, sacrificial victim, earth-mother or witch--is everything, as Simone de Beauvoir put it, "except herself."[207] She is, like language,[208] given to man so that he may make Surrealist use of her.

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[203] Especially in Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920), S.E., XVIII, pp. 1-64.

[204] Civilization and Its Discontents (1930), S.E., XXI, pp. 57-145.

[205] Erich Fromm, Greatness and Limitations of Freud's Thought (London: Sphere, 1982), pp. 51-53.

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[206] This explains why Surrealists, though beyond conventional aesthetics (Breton, "Manifesto," p. 26), were preoccupied with technical matters. See, for example, Warlick, p. 73, note 17.

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[207] The Second Sex, trans. and ed. H. M. Parshley (New York: Knopf, 1953), p. 237.

[208] Note that automatic writing was personified as a female. See chapter III, figure 42.

Chapter III: Literary Origins of Surrealist Misogyny[1]

Despite the critical debates that continue to plague literature on Surrealism, one point of view remains undeniable: Surrealism was a highly intellectual, literary movement, and those individuals who participated in it most effectively were all infused with the notion that its physical elements--its poetry, its pictures, its films, its theatre, its magazines--all constituted a kind of language. These elements were parts of what André Breton called a "forest of signs",[2] indications in *this* world of a Beyond which promised a better life. One of the more tantalizing components of this language was that which both expressed *and* affected the erotic components of the human personality. But even here there is considerable debate regarding the exact meaning of the signs. Xavière Gauthier, for example, maintains that power figures more prominently than sensuality in most erotic Surrealist art, whereas Robert

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[1] Portions of this chapter were presented at a colloquium on "Literary Precedents of Surrealist Misogyny" at Ontario Hall, Queen's University, 5 March 1986. An attempt has been made to incorporate remarks made there by Douglas Stewart, Pierre de la Ruffinière du Prey and Bruce Laughton of Queen's, and by Damie Stillman of the University of Delaware.

[2] The original phrase is "cette *forêt d'indices*." It appears in André Breton, "La beauté sera convulsive," p. 14. This essay is taken up as the first chapter of Breton's *L'Amour fou*, pp. 7-19. A very interesting essay on Breton's Surrealism as a semiotic system is Rosalind Krauss, "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," in the exhibition catalogue *L'Amour fou: Photography and Surrealism*, pp. 13-55.

Benayoun argues that that which constitutes femininity is no more the exclusive province of women than masculinity is that of men.[3] Both of these critics, however, have the unhappy habit of glossing over specific sources in literary accounts which influenced the Surrealists--accounts which range from supposedly pure literature to popular science magazines. In attempting to recover something of the meaning of one group of erotic signs, those which are misogynistic or hateful of women, Gauthier comes to the conclusion that Surrealist poetry venerates women, whereas painting reveals only hatred.[4] This is quite evidently an over-simplification, and what follows here is an attempt to trace the roots of this hatred to precisely those literary accounts overlooked by Gauthier and Benayoun. One may well ask how a movement which was unreservedly in the service of eros and the virtual deification of women could possibly have hated the object of its desires. The answer, as will be seen, is that this component of the Surrealists' language is founded upon a misapprehension of women which soon turns to misappropriation. The rest will follow as a matter of course. It should be borne in mind, however, that any such investigation of Surrealism has something of the character of a leisurely stroll late at night. The literary precedents are like streetlamps, and many ideas crowd around their names like clouds of insects attracted by a nocturnal glow. And, perhaps, a face will unexpectedly lurk in the shadows.

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[3] Gauthier, pp. 269-79; Benayoun, p. 180.

[4] Gauthier, pp. 331-33.

a) Automatism as secretarial science

"We must come to a new declaration of the rights of man."[5] With these words the Surrealist Revolution began in earnest, for they appeared on the cover of the first issue of La Révolution Surréaliste. The pages that followed constituted a handbook for the achievement of this goal: first and foremost, according to the editors, was to come the replacement of conventional intelligence with a concentration on the world of dream, which "alone leaves to man all his rights to liberty."[6] Of what significance, they asked, are pen and paper, writing and poetry before the dream, a giant which can reach the clouds? But it is not just in a cure for insomnia that Surrealism finds its significance, for while it is the "intersection of the enchantments of sleep, alcohol, tobacco, ether, opium, cocaine, morphine," it is also a liberator, the "breaker of chains."[7] The Surrealists do not merely sleep, nor do they merely drink, smoke or inject. They dream--actively, aggressively, with the intention of changing a disappointing and contentious reality for the better. Poetically expressed, if to practice Realism is "to trim the trees", then to practice Surrealism is "to prune life".[8]

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[5] "Il faut aboutir à une nouvelle déclaration des droits de l'homme." La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1 (December, 1924), cover.

[6] Jacques-André Boiffard, Paul Eluard, and Roger Vitrac, "Préface," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1 (December, 1924), p. 1.

[7] Ibid.

How did the Surrealists propose one could thus emend life? The answer is still to be found in André Breton's "Manifesto of Surrealism":

> Man, that inveterate dreamer, grows daily more discontent with his destiny.... If he still retains a certain lucidity, all he can do is turn back toward his childhood [in which] the absence of any known restrictions allows him the perspective of several lives lived at once.[9]

But adolescence and adulthood have restricted this realm of polyvalent possibilities, restraining the boundless imagination with "laws of an arbitrary utility." Unfortunately, the imagination is "incapable of assuming this inferior role for very long, and it generally prefers to abandon man to his lustreless fate" (p. 4). The exigencies of daily life, what Breton calls "imperative practical necessity," in effect drive the imaginative life away from man. Real life places so many restrictions on Breton's "intimation[s] of what can be" (p. 5) that he concludes "the mere word 'freedom' is the only one that still excited me" (p. 4). It becomes clear that the new declaration of the rights of man will involve full expression of the liberated imagination, entailing a casting off of the shackles of mundane daily necessity.

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[8] "La Révolution...la Révolution.... Le réalisme, c'est émonder les arbres, le surréalisme, c'est émonder la vie." Ibid., p. 2. There is an untranslatable pun operating here, for émonder la vie connotes not only the literal removal of obscuring material--as in to prune trees, to hull barley, and so forth--but also a sense of extraction or negation of the world. Incidentally, the rejection of Realism is a commonplace of the period and can also be found in Breton's "Manifesto," pp. 7-8.

[9] Ibid., p. 3. Subsequent references to the English edition will be retained in the text. Stressed words are Breton's.

The role of dream in this revolution is to prepare the way for the imagination's intervention of reality. We may yet "succeed in recording the contents of dreams in their entirety" (p. 14), Breton notes, justifying the contemporary practice of reciting dreams and publishing them in La Révolution Surréaliste. Nevertheless, this is only a half-step toward the true liberation that is the goal of the ongoing Surrealist revolution. When we consider a photograph of one such recitation (fig. 41)[10] we are immediately reminded of a passage in the "Manifesto" which describes the process by which the ephemera of the imagination can be fixed. There we find that the

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[10] Originally intended simply to grace the cover of the first number of La Révolution Surréaliste as a document of the activities in the Bureau central de recherches surréalistes, 15, rue de Grenelle, Man Ray's photograph has since been appropriated as Surrealist art. See the catalogue L'Amour fou: Photography and Surrealism, fig. 5. There is little significant discussion of the image in the text. There is a variant, not used on the magazine's cover, in which Simone still sits at the typewriter but holds a lorgnette.

Surrealists "have made no effort whatsoever to filter," and have made themselves into "simple receptacles of so many echoes [i.e., of the interior Surrealist voice], modest recording instruments (p. 27f)." The photograph shows that in practice there are really three parts to this process: the generation of imagery, its recording, and its consumption by others. At the lower right, poet Robert Desnos recites his dreams. Above him, Philippe Soupault, Giorgio de Chirico, Paul Eluard, Breton himself, Jacques-André Boiffard, Roger Vitrac and Max Morise listen intently.[11] Desnos, as Breton noted in his "Manifesto," had better things to do than to record the results of "orally following his thought" (p. 29). This mechanical task is left to the figure at the centre of this circle of narrator and audience. Here sits the true recording instrument, Simone Kahn, wife of Breton. It already begins to appear that the role of women in the new revolution is simply an analogue of that in the workaday world: there, we might find secretaries passively registering the executive decisions of the men around them. Here, we find Simone, passively acting as bridge between the Surrealist supply and the Surrealist demand.

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[11] That Chirico is the least attentive is peculiarly interesting, for it is well known that he would not be particularly respected for long. See, for example, Max Morise, "A propos de l'Exposition Chirico," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 4 (15 July, 1925), pp. 31-2. Breton is more unforgiving in his Le Surréalisme et la Peinture, pp. 12-19.

Not to be ignored in this connection are the history and mythology, as it were, of the modern secretary. Virtually begun by the Remington Company in 1873, when its executives made the unprecedented decision to train only girls to demonstrate its new typewriters, the history of the office girl passed quickly through several stages. By 1902, the essentially mechanical nature of her job was so firmly established that her menial position was more secure than those of the more highly specialized males--precisely because her mechanical skill could be easily transferred from one task to another. Between 1911 and 1921 the job market opened up even more, largely due to the Great War and its effects. Because of this, the independent working girl became a distinct type, one which went on, in the 1920s, to become irrevocably associated with the _flapper_, the modern era's answer to the subordinate and _sexually available_ domestic servants and shopgirls of previous decades. Thus the myth of the sexy and subordinate secretary, which persists today in spite of educated attempts to eradicate it, was born in precisely the era in which we find Simone at the typewriter.[12]

Even when we consider more advanced stages of the Surrealist project, we see a similar situation obtain. We remember, first of all, that dreams in and of themselves are at best a half-step toward the Surrealist goal. Everyone has them but few understand their significance or how they might be used. Simply to dream is not enough. Thus Breton declares, "we may hope that the mysteries which really are not [i.e., dreams fall short of being true mysteries] will give way to the great Mystery" (p. 14). He follows with this oft-quoted remark:

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[12] See the full account entitled "Rise of the Secretary," in Mary Kathleen Benêt, _Secretary: Enquiry into the Female Ghetto_ (London: Sidgwick and Jackson, 1972), pp. 31-61, especially pp. 53-4.

> I believe in the future resolution of these two states, dream and reality, which are seeminly so contradictory, into a kind of absolute reality, a _surreality_, if one may so speak.

The methods one must adopt to foment this permanent revolution, to precipitate this conflation of dream and reality, are too complicated and evolve in significant ways over too long a period of time to discuss here, but we must allude to the core concept informing them all: automatism. Often loosely interpreted as an analogy of Freudian free association,[13] automatism is really much closer to a profane or secularized analogy of mediumistic communication with otherwordly spirits. While Freud _is_ mentioned in this regard in Breton's "Manifesto," principally on pages 22-3, Breton eventually gives the larger role to Mme. Hélène Smith, whose exemplary powers as a medium were known to him through the writings of poet cum parapsychologist F. W. H. Myers and his translator Théodore Flournoy.[14] In his "Le message automatique," and even in his Nadja, Breton cites this remarkable woman as a role model of sorts, capable of gaining access to a hitherto unexplored realm of psychic possibilities.[15] He retains the presence of mind, however, to distinguish carefully between the methods of the medium and those of the Surrealist, largely on the basis of his skepticism regarding the independent existence of real, supernatural spirits.[16] Stripped of its objectionable spiritualism, automatism comes down to this:

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[13] This is usually the case in popular histories and general studies. See, for example, Chipp, pp. 369-371. Even the impressive intellect of Theodor Adorno missed the point when he became skeptical of Surrealism around 1934 for its rejection of the second half of the free-association process, interpretation. See his "Der Surrealismus," in _Noten zur Literatur_, I (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1958), p. 157. For Adorno and Surrealism in general, see Susan Buck-Morss, _The Origin of Negative Dialectics: Theodor W. Adorno, Walter Benjamin, and the Frankfurt Institute_ (New York: the Free Press, 1977), pp. 124-9.

> the disinterested play of thought in the absence of any control exercised by reason, exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern. It tends to ruin once and for all all other psychic mechanisms and to substitute itself for them in solving all the principal problems of life.[17]

Automatism, or more precisely its mechanical application as automatic writing, was perceived as the best means of eliminating the distinctions between the normal waking state and the world of the unconscious mind, normally manifested inadequately[18] in fragmentary dreams. The participant is instructed to make himself comfortable, to put himself in a receptive state of mind, to forget about such unnecessary distractions as literature and talent, and to write quickly, without any preconceived subject ("Manifesto", p. 29). This new procedure appears to eliminate the middleman--or rather middlewoman--of dream recitation, but it is a short-lived illusion. In 1927 automatic writing was expressly imagined as a rather too mature schoolgirl (fig. 42). The obscurity of the image tends to fuse the sitter's legs with those of the chair on which she sits, suggesting that she is quite incapable of moving about to establish an identity independent of, or not subordinate to, the task at hand.[19] She can do nothing but write, responding mechanically to the promptings of the unconscious. Like the very real Simone, this unreal, imaginative, even mythic young schoolgirl is only a means to an end.

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[14] This connection is most fruitfully explored in Starobinski, pp. 320-341.

[15] "Le message automatique," p. 56; Nadja, pp. 79-80.

[16] See chapter II, pp. 105-6.

[17] This paraphrases and rearranges the words of Breton's too-often quoted definition of Surrealism in the "Manifesto," p. 26.

It is very revealing in this connection that Breton's concept of the femme-enfant, the woman-child, has its roots in the experiences of this period, though it is largely a phenomenon of the 1930s. Breton met Nadja, for example, on the fourth of October, 1927, three days after the automatic-writing schoolgirl was published.[20] The strange young woman was described by the poet as frivolous and simple, both later characteristics of the innocent and carefree femme-enfant (p. 71). Moreover, Nadja practised a type of automatic drawing and professed powers of clairvoyance (p. 83, plates 29-36). She even called herself Hélène, which Breton could not resist associating with both Hélène Smith and another clairvoyant, Mme. Sacco (p. 80). It is clear that Breton thought such female mediumship was essentially mechanical, just like automatic writing.[21]

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[18] This is clearly the implication of Breton's preoccupation with recording "dreams in their entirety". See the "Manifesto," p. 14.

[19] As reproduced on the cover of La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 9-10 (1 October, 1927), the strange fusion of leg and seat is pronounced. One must conclude that it is intentional, even if--or perhaps especially if--it was arrived at accidentally.

In the 1930s, Breton's ideas about the roles of women expanded, due at least in part to the increasing influence of political thought. Even here, however, the generalized Surrealist misapprehension of women as somehow non-political entities had established an historical pattern which coloured his thinking. In 1924, for example, the Surrealists portrayed themselves and others they admired in a kind of photographic homage to Germaine Berthon (fig. 43), an anarchist who had killed Marius Plateau, the leader of the extreme right-wing group les Camelots du Roi. Yet neither the quotation from Baudelaire--"woman is the being who projects the greatest shadow and the greatest light into our dreams"--nor the textual reference--"this woman admirable in all things"[22]--places any emphasis on the anarchist gesture itself. It seems instead that the Surrealists were interested in her precisely because she was a woman who had driven a man to and beyond the brink of despair; rumours had it that the victim's son had killed himself for love of the assassin.[23] That the pages of this very magazine were filled with accounts of forlorn lovers' suicides is surely no coincidence.[24]

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[20] Nadja, p. 63. Subsequent references are retained in the text.

[21] See "Le message automatique," passim.

Equally misunderstanding of the intentions of particular women was the homage paid to the Papin sisters, Léa and Christine, in the May, 1933 issue of Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution. A short text noted that the sisters were first raised in a convent and later forced to endure the insults and excessive exigencies of a bourgeois household for six years. At the end of this period, they tore out the eyes of their patronesses and crushed their heads. Then they washed and went to bed. There is no real explanation of the girls' motives at all; instead there is a pair of before and after pictures (fig. 44) with a caption suggesting that they had stepped fully armed, as it were, from the pages of the literature dear to the Surrealists, in this case Lautréamont's Les Chants de Maldoror.[25]

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[22] See Louis Aragon, "Germaine Berthon," La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1 (1 December, 1924), p. 12. The illustration is on p. 17.

[23] José Pierre, Surréalisme et anarchie (Paris: Plasma, 1983), p. 11. Cf. also Dawn Ades, "Photography and the Surrealist Text," in the catalogue L'Amour fou: Photography and Surrealism, p. 159.

[24] They are short quotations from contemporary news sources, reprinted without comment. Note also that the issue included a questionnaire on "Suicide. Is it a Solution?" The responses were published in the next edition.

This fundamental, practical misapprehension did not abate in the case of Breton. He had borrowed from Engels the notion that complete societal transformation--of which, in his view, Marxist revolution was only a part--would lead to a complete break with antiquated social customs like conventional bourgeois marriage on the one hand and prostitution on the other. Men would therefore not have to pressure or to purchase a woman's surrender. The result would be a first generation of women living in a truly liberated revolutionary society, the members of which would be free to surrender to men because they loved them. We recall that love, for Breton, was the only means by which man could be reconciled with life;[26] but not only does it seem "never to have occurred to Breton that to 'surrender' may not correspond to a liberated woman's concept,"[27] it is also still apparent that women are perceived as instruments which, when subordinate to men, can effect transformation of the real world into the Surreal. Moreover, he has the boldness to maintain that the males are assisting the females in their search for identity. "Man, a stranger on earth," he writes, "is acclimated here below only by woman. He 'delivers' only woman, helping *her* discover *her* purest destiny."[28] In this light, a photocollage made by Breton in 1938 is quite revealing (fig. 45).

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[25] See the short, untitled text by Paul Eluard and Benjamin Péret, Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 5 (15 May, 1933), pp. 27-8. The illustration is among the endpapers. In striking contrast to this poetic apotheosis is an article by Dr. Jacques Lacan, "Motifs du Crime Paranoïaque," Minotaure, no. 3-4 (12 December, 1933), pp. 25-8. Lacan's discussion mixes psychoanalysis with sacrificial curiosity.

On a general level, the work illustrates that one is a Surrealist first and a practitioner of a particular means of expression second, for the distinctions between the arts dissolve in the hands of the active Surrealist. More particularly, it shows Breton himself engaged in Surrealist practice; he is a visionary, capable of introducing into the world the furtive creatures of his imagination. He is aided and abetted in this revolutionary task by the woman in the background. Her role is larger than that of her predecessors, for now she is both witness and muse, whispering her inspiration and smiling at the result. However, she is caged--evidently happy to be so. Despite her expanded role as muse--that is, a "fragment of paradise which has fallen from its orbit and which binds man to the earth"[29]--she is still entirely subordinate to the development of the man, both in terms of interior growth or individuation and in terms of social upheaval through imaginative projection. In other words, she is still harnessed to the principal Surrealist process, clearly identified by the title of the collage, L'Ecriture surréaliste.

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[26] See the *enquête*, usually known by its first question: "Quelle sorte d'espoir mettez-vous dans l'amour?", in *La Révolution Surréaliste*, no. 12 (15 December, 1929), p. 65. The introduction contains the phrase, "l'idée d'*amour* est seule capable de réconcilier tout homme, momentanément ou non, avec l'idée de *vie*." The italics are Breton's.

[27] Nicolas Calas, "Freedom, Love and Poetry," *Artforum*, XVI, no. 9 (May, 1978), p. 22. Chadwick, *Women Artists*, p. 14, uses precisely this argument without noting its source.

[28] Breton, *Point du jour*, p. 189. The italics are mine.

It may reasonably be argued that we are dealing with signs, images, symbols, signifiers, after all, and that no harm is meant.[30] Indeed, real women are exalted in the Bretonian ideology. But from a modern feminist's point of view, the direction of men's relocations of women--whether movements upward into exaltation or downward into degradation--is irrelevant. A woman is not born but made by men and by patriarchal culture;[31] she is not allowed to become herself, as is presumably the man (or here the Surrealist) undergoing the process of individuation. A woman, whether flesh and blood or sign, symbol and semantic index, is little more than a catalyst of the process of development of males from the general to the individual. The Surrealist attitude towards women has moved from misapprehension to misappropriation, from misunderstanding to misuse.

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[29] Carrouges, Basic Concepts, p. 213.

[30] This is the implication of Charlotte Stokes' rejection of the theme or "woman as victim" as not to the point. And yet she does not deny that "these meaningless[!] or destructive human activities have been turned by Ernst... into an alchemical process of self-realization." See her "La Femme 100 Têtes by Max Ernst," pp. 242-3. On signs in general, see Alquié, pp. 84-110.

b) Nietzsche

It has become apparent that the phrase which opened the Surrealist Revolution had a specific, though overlooked, meaning: "we must arrive at a declaration of the rights of man," not mankind. To this end, women can serve chiefly as a means, a medium, a tool or device which is not itself free but which can, through servitude, contribute to the enfranchisement of men. It is precisely for this reason that Breton writes in his "Manifesto": "And anyway, isn't what matters that we be masters of ourselves, the masters of women, and of love, too?" (p. 17).

The notion of being "masters of ourselves" brings to our attention the first of a number of literary precursors who provided inspiration for the Surrealists' creative misappropriation of women. Friedrich Nietzsche was not unanimously accepted by the Surrealist group--in fact, he appears on neither the "read" nor the "don't read" lists issued in 1931[32]--but it is indisputable that his influence on a few artists, especially André Masson, was significant. It is well known that when Masson first met Breton in 1924, he discovered to his delight a kindred spirit sharing his tastes for Lautréamont, Raymond Roussel and Pierre Reverdy. But when the artist mentioned Dostoievski and Nietzsche, Breton's reaction was sudden: "What I detest the most."[33] Of course, the overemphasis on the author of the "Manifesto" in past Surrealism studies has led to distortions of artist's intentions. One might even go so far as to suggest that the larger historical significance of an artist is inversely proportionate to the closeness of his contact with the so-called "pope of Surrealism."[34] Max Ernst already said as much when he described those artists who were willing to subordinate themselves to Breton as "martyrs".[35] The discovery of the influence of Nietzsche on some of the first-generation Surrealists further undermines the theoretical dominance that has always been given to Breton.[36] It is for this reason that studies of Georges Bataille have recently begun to cast a shadow over those of Breton.[37]

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[31] See, for example, Andrea Dworkin, Pornography: Men Possessing Women (New York: Putnam's Sons, 1979), pp. 128, 200-1.

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[32] Cowling, "An other culture," p. 456. A short discussion of this *bibliothèque idéale* is available in Philippe Audoin, "Très peu de livres," *Magazine littéraire*, no. 91-2 (September, 1974), pp. 20-2.

[33] See André Masson, "45, rue Blomet" (1968), in his *Le Rebelle*, p. 77.

[34] This phrase is used of Breton nearly everywhere. Its origin was in a headline, "Papologie d'André Breton," on the collective declaration entitled *Un Cadavre* (January, 1930), signed by Georges Bataille, Robert Desnos and ten others. The text condemned Breton for the "excommunications" of Bataille, Masson and others in the "Second Manifesto of Surrealism", passim.

The individual Surrealist's development is rather like Nietzsche's will to power, at least as it appears in those whose will to power was strong but sublimated into creativity: *Übermenschen*, Supermen. Nietzsche's "*I teach you the Superman*. Man is something that should be overcome"[38] can be compared to Breton's "What matters is that we be masters of ourselves." Both statements imply a turn-of-the-century crisis of conscience, for both reject the Darwinian obliteration of distinctions between the human and animal worlds, replacing it with a conception of man with power over himself, unlike the beasts.[39] This also entails the recuperation of lost powers, once considered occult, without recourse to the supernatural. In both cases, human psychology is understood in terms of power: "'good' is now understood as sublimated 'evil', the evil and good passions being essentially the same, i.e., will to power."[40] Nietzsche writes in The Anti-Christ: "What is good?--All that heightens the feeling of power.... What is bad?--All that proceeds from weakness. What is happiness?--The feeling that power increases--that a resistance is overcome."[41] The exercise of power brings happiness, and since that which demands the greatest exercise of power is the overcoming of oneself, the happiest man is one who has overcome himself--the Superman. There is no justification in such a moral system for reliance on divine sanction or social convention. In their own way, the Surrealists cogently argued the same point in their collective text "Hands Off Love," which attacked the restrictions of conventional bourgeois morality as revealed in the divorce case of Charlie Chaplin. Put simply, the Surrealists chose to defend "Genius against Bourgeois Hypocrisy," replacing the unrealistically pure role of Woman as Wife and Mother with a newly liberated female, capable of free and imaginative sexual expression to the point of indecency, at least as far as Mrs. Chaplin was concerned.[42] In a very direct way, this notion finds expression in the work of Max Ernst, who once said of Nietzsche's Die Fröhliche Wissenschaft (The Gay Science, 1882) that the "whole of Surrealism is in it, if you know how to read."[43] In his so-called collage-novel, La Femme 100 Têtes, the German painter writes: "Be advised that, in the memory of man, the femme 100 têtes never had a rapport with the phantom of repopulation."[44] The reference is at least in part to the contemporary social situation, specifically the forced maternity and natalist propaganda advocated by French governments following the first World War. This had led, on the one hand, to early feminist Nelly Roussel's "strike of the wombs" in 1919 and, on the other, to laws of 1920 banning the sale of contraceptives.[45] Ernst's phrase thus seems like a blow in favour of a feminist stance--"Our Bodies, Ourselves", that type of thing[46]--but the visual form it takes reveals other, more negative motives. In "Cézanne and Rosa Bonheur", the tenth plate of chapter eight in La Femme 100 Têtes (fig. 46), Ernst offers us an erotic tableau of artist-to-woman relations. Although Cézanne is strapped into a restrictive apparatus of sorts, it is he who is in control, for while Rosa orally stimulates the seated artist, his gesticulations direct her movements.[47] The tools with which he conducts this self-stimulation are those of the painter[48], which leads to the reading that Cézanne

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[35] See Max Ernst, *Die Nacktheit der Frau ist weiser als die Lehren des Philosophen* (Cologne: Verlag Galerie der Spiegel, 1970), unpaginated.

[36] This is not to say it had never been tried, for the excommunications mentioned in note 34 were the results of early disputes of this sort. Nevertheless, Breton still has very nearly fanatical defenders, like José Pierre in Paris and Franklin Rosemont in Chicago.

[37] This is one of the implications of Rosalind Krauss's "Photography in the Service of Surrealism," passim.

[38] I have made use of the mammoth eighteen-volume *Complete Works of Friedrich Nietzsche*, ed. Oscar Levy (London and New York: T. N. Foulis, 1909-13). Subsequent references will give the title and date of the original, followed by the volume and page number of this *Works* edition. In this instance, *Thus Spake Zarathustra* (1883), part I, prologue 3 (*Works*, II, p. 6). The italics are Nietzsche's.

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[39] See Nietzsche, Towards a Geneology of Morals (1887), part I, sections 10-11 (Works, XIII, especially p. 42). See also the discussion in R. J. Hollingdale, Nietzsche: the Man and His Philosophy (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1965), pp. 196, 227ff.

[40] Ibid., p. 196.

[41] The Antichrist (1895), book I section 2. See the Portable Nietzsche, ed. and trans. W. Kaufmann (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1954), p. 570.

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[42] The thrust of the text is that Mrs. Chaplin considered any sexual expression not directed towards reproduction as immoral and perverted. Chaplin, who acknowledged he had a mistress whom he loved, was lionized by the thirty-two signatories as "simply and solely the defender of love" (p. 153).

[43] Quoted in Russell, p. 20.

[44] The text falls at the end of the eighth chapter, p. 287, and is the only one that does not accompany a collage.

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[45] See the useful chronology in Elaine Marks and Isabelle de Courtivion, eds., New French Feminisms: An Anthology (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1980), pp. 10-27.

[46] See the well known book by the Boston Women's Health Collective, Our Bodies, Ourselves: A Book by and for Women, 2nd ed. (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1976).

[47] Interestingly, Ernst was one of the signers of "Hands Off Love," which made a point of approving the practice of fellatio. Note also that the following issue of La Révolution Surréaliste included the "Recherches sur la Sexualité". Fellatio is described therein as among the more favoured sexual positions (p. 34). See the commentary by Gauthier, pp. 227-8.

[48] Carol Duncan has made the point that modernist formal experiments "transpose the sexual conflict onto the 'higher' plane of art." See her "Virility and Domination in Early Twentieth-Century Vanguard Painting," Artforum, (December, 1973), pp. 30-9, reprinted in Norma Broude and Mary D. Garrard, eds., Feminism and Art History: Questioning the Litany (New York: Harper and Row, 1982), p. 301. In Ernst's case, essentially the same phenomenon is taking place. The vehicle is, however, an alternative to pictorial modernism.

provides a model of the artist as Übermensch: the will to power is strong but sublimated into creativity. The control of self is manifested as control of the masturbatory impulse through projective identification. In other words, it is onto the woman that the active role is projected. The little painting in the background confirms the hypothesis. A violinist in the form of a male cat inspires a tiny female cat in a skirt to dance. It is no accident that his violin bow is parallel to Cézanne's brush.

The cat picture itself calls into question the role of the historical Rosa Bonheur as a painter of animals, but it seems that the picture is a part of Cézanne's mental projection and not that of Rosa. Her role as an artist in her own right is insignificant, a notion which finds its roots once again in literary predecessors. For example, Schopenhauer believed that women were the "undersized, narrow-shouldered, broad-hipped and short-legged...'number two' of the human race, possessed of no sensitivity for any of the arts."[49] Similarly, Nietzsche felt that all aspects of female emancipation--including suffrage, education, employment and independence--were signs of decadence.[50] And Jules Verne, who also appears in the eighth chapter of La Femme 100 Têtes, once noted that a "Woman does better to inspire verses than to make them."[51] Of the artists of Ernst's generation, Salvador Dalí was most explicit on this same point. "Women should never do painting," he noted:

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[49] "On Women," Parerga and Paralipomena (1851), quoted in F. C. Copleston, Arthur Schopenhauer: Philosopher of Pessimism (London: Search Press, 1975), pp. 39-40. Copleston also quotes from Anselm Feuerbach's Memoirs: Schopenhauer apparently told the German painter, "God preserve us from women whose mind has shot up into mere intellect."

> There have been a few women painters but none of them amount to very much--like Rosa Bonheur. Woman can influence men--like Beatrice with Dante. They can even be queens.... But they don't have the creative gift.[52]

Even some female Surrealists seem to have been culturally prejudiced in this way, at least if we accept at face value a photograph of Ernst and his painter wife Dorothea Tanning (fig. 47), made by Lee Miller, a former assistant and model to Man Ray.[53]

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[50] Virtually every major study of Nietzsche notes this. One of the more accessible ones is Crane Brinton, Nietzsche (Cambridge: Harvard, 1948), especially pp. 108-11.

[51] This comment was made in a speech of 1893. Asked to award the annual prizes at a girls' school, Verne pronounced various antifeminist clichés; women were to avoid all unfeminine activities like cycling, roller skating, sports, arts and science. Their only social responsibility was the raising of the family. See Jean Chesneaux, The Political and Social Ideas of Jules Verne, trans. T. Wikeley (London: Thames and Hudson, 1972), pp. 16-7.

[52] See Lake, p. 199. Dalí goes on to demonstrate an active anti-female prejudice which overrides perception. He notes that Françoise Gilot's artworks would have been good if they were Picasso's, but since they were not, they were a disaster. If she were a brilliant lover, he adds, it would be another story (pp. 200-1). He later maintains that, "for a woman, the quality of the soul is in direct proportion to the length of the tongue" (p. 278). It should be noted that Stokes's "La Femme 100 Têtes by Max Ernst," pp. 292-297, discovers some purely biographical reasons for Ernst's peculiar mistreatment of Cézanne and Rosa Bonheur. Particularly interesting is the fact that the latter was the artist's nickname for his wife, for whom he had lost respect. They had separated in 1922, and she had become that most unnecessary of creatures, an art critic and historian.

It seems, then, that the Surrealists preferred women to be culturally dumb, as it were, and this explains *in part* why so many images of them are headless--*100 Têtes*.[54] The threat of a woman is not any intellectual or cultural weapon she might wield, like the right to vote, but the possibility of her indirect mastery of men through a sly combination of sex and piety. Whereas a Victorian male might have described women as "ministering angels," Nietzsche saw them as unscrupulous, self-centered sensualists, schemers, liars, haters and practitioners of a kind of slave morality. What was worse, women were fully capable of using nominally Christian values with intelligent hypocrisy to dominate men. "Man is for woman a means," he writes; "the end is always the child."[55] Nietzsche is saying that a woman has not the wits[56] to live an independent life and has, therefore, but two options: the first is to strive for power through pregnancy and childbirth;[57] the second is simply to let herself be overpowered. Nietzsche formulates this latter, and more desirable, option in this way: "The happiness of man is: I will. The happiness of women is: he wills."[58] Elsewhere he writes, "Will is the manner of man; willingness that of woman."[59] This helps to explain not only why Rosa's cat picture has been appropriated by Cézanne in Ernst's collage, but also why Rosa does not resist his use of her as a mere instrument of his self-gratification.

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[53] Chadwick refers to this photograph as merely "a wry comment on stature and scale." See the caption to her figure 78, p. 94.

[54] A list of such images would be prohibitively long. One can find straightforward headlessness, as in Ernst's *Celebes* (1921), or any number of variations: obscured or shrouded heads, as in Magritte's *L'Histoire centrale* (1928); gagged women, as in Masson's *Le bâillon vert à bouche de pensée* (1938, fig. 31); blinded or blindfolded, as in the notorious opening sequence of Salvador Dalí and Luis Bunuel's *Un Chien andalou* (1928, fig. 7); and so on.

[55] Nietzsche, "On Young and Old Women," *Zarathustra*, part I, section 18 (*Works*, XI, p. 75). See also Brinton, p. 111.

The attribution to the female of willingness and compliance is in fact a male weapon of defense. Since it was generally held that a woman was culturally dumb, men had only to worry about her manipulative sexuality. The way to reinforce the alternative--that is, a passive, even masochistic sexual receptivity--was to create and disseminate myths which defined women only in terms of natural forces, which of course could be controlled by men. Thus began the fictive dichotomy which still exists today: Man is to woman as culture is to nature.[60] That Max Ernst was of a similar mind can be deduced from his writings alone. In 1934, for example, he noted that he would not praise a forest that had been tamed or put into order--that is, he preferred a wild, natural state to a controlled cultural one. This seems innocuous enough until we realize that the forest is a woman.

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[56] Ibid., p. 109. Men have character and passion, he affirmed, while women have low intelligence.

[57] Even Nietzsche's master Schopenhauer thought reproduction was a female evil designed merely to bring more evil wills into the world. See Michael Fox, ed., Schopenhauer: His Philosophical Achievement (Susses: Harvester, 1980), p. 178.

[58] "On Young and Old Women," Zarathustra, part I, section 18 (Works, XI, p. 76).

[59] The Gay Science (1882), book I, section 68. See The Gay Science, trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Vintage, 1974), p. 126.

> The day will come when a forest, until then the friend of dissipation, will resolve to frequent only well-behaved places.... Overcome by virtue, she will correct the bad habits of her youth. She will become geometric, dutiful.... Will the forest be praised for its new conduct? Not by me.[61]

He goes on to contrast the cultivated (or cultural) forest/woman with her vastly more preferable Oceanic equivalents:

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[60] The best discussion of this problem is still Ortner, pp. 5-31.

[61] Max Ernst, "Les Mystères de la forêt," Minotaure, I, no. 5 (12 May, 1934), p. 6. It is important to note that two widely available books on Ernst give a translation which changes considerably the meaning of the original text. Both Waldman, p. 45, and Schneede, p. 110, give the following: "The day will come on which a forest, hitherto a *womanizer*.... Enfeebled by virtue, *he* will forget the bad habits of *his* youth [my italics]." The original text is: "Viendra la jour où une forêt, amie jusque-là de la dissipation, prendra la résolution.... Se laissant toucher par la vertu, elle se corrigera des mauvaises habitudes contractées dans sa jeunesse. Elle deviendra géométrique, consciencieuse...."

> Nude, they adorn themselves only with
> their majesty and their mystery.[62]

Ernst has unwittingly stated that he associates wilderness with characteristics that are now recognized as sexual stereotypes. By limiting the identity of women to natural forms and forces, the cultural risks she might otherwise create for men are avoided. This does not eliminate all the danger, however, for there is still the question of her manipulative sexuality. Like the headless forces of nature, a woman's sexual appetite can erupt into the world without warning, seizing upon hapless males with no hope of pity and release. Ernst has elsewhere noted that he has "mixed feelings"[63] before this untamed nature-woman, a sentiment which appears less ambiguous in his small series of paintings entitled Garden-Airplane-Trap (fig. 48). While his peers were fascinated with the more explicit, sexually voracious praying mantis at this time,[64] Ernst veiled the true meaning of his picture in a poetic metaphor of nature as devourer. His inspiration was largely the intellectual climate as described above, but to this one can add his interest in carnivorous plants[65] and an old treatise in his possession concerning the trapping of birds.[66] The artist's self-identification with birds has been established for so long that it need not be reiterated here,[67] but it is interesting to note that Ernst was also well aware that the flight of birds signified an erect penis for Freud.[68] The meaning of the painting is therefore veiled but nonetheless readable: the *Garden-Airplane-Trap* speaks of the sexual pitfalls that a man must avoid by superimposing his sexual will over that of the culturally-dumb female. The *Garden-Airplane-Trap* presents a problem to which "Cézanne and Rosa Bonheur" provides the solution.

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[62] Ernst, "Mystères de la forêt," p. 6. The translation in Russell, pp. 112-3, otherwise close to that here, mistranslates "adorn themselves" (se parent) as "stake" (presumably parier, instead of se parer). The full sentence is "Nues, elles ne se parent que de leur majesté et de leur mystère."

[63] Ernst, Die Nacktheit der Frau, includes a poetic letter to Mother Nature which ends with the words, "Veuillez croire, chère Madame la Nature, à l'expression de mes sentiments mélangés."

[64] See Pressly, pp. 600-615. Note also the discussion in chapter I, above.

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[65] See Schneede, p. 153, and Russell, p. 114.

[66] Discussed in ibid., pp. 114, 116, the treatise was C. J. Kresz's *Aviceptologie française, ou traité générale de toutes les ruses dont on peut se servir pour prendre les oiseaux* (1820).

[67] The almost simultaneous death of a pet cockatoo and birth of a baby sister in January, 1906 led Ernst to "a dangerous confusion between birds and humans...and even later Max identified himself voluntarily with *Loplop, the Superior of the Birds*." Max Ernst, "Some Data on the Youth of M.E., as told by himself," in *Beyond Painting*, pp. 28-9. The best extended discussion of this connection is Spies, *Loplop*, passim.

[68] See, most notably, the *Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis* (1916-17), *S.E.*, XV, p. 155. Ernst would certainly have understood the vulgar pun *Vögel* (bird)/ *vögeln* (to fuck). Cf. Spector, p. 60.

That the artist saw it as a problem deserving a solution is revealed by the subtle way in which he reversed the order of events in Beyond Painting: "Voracious gardens devoured by a vegetation which is the debris of wrecked airplanes" (p. 10). Sexually transliterated, this means that gardens/females are destroyed by the debris/ejaculate of airplanes/penises. In other words, fellation is preferable to normal copulation because the male retains control, perhaps through degradation of the female, in spite of his visible loss of virility. This is the presumed outcome of "Cézanne and Rosa Bonheur," as well as that of dozens of fellation scenes in other artists' works, especially Dalí's (fig. 49). This is uncomfortably close to the condition of pornography as a system of power relations, rather than sexual relations. In fact, some describe pornography and art in terms of such projections as functions of an inability to distinguish brain-generated signs from external ones.[69] In a very limited sense, this is Surrealism.

It may seem, at first glance, an insurmountable problem that a collective endeavour dedicated to automatism would be interested in a philosophy of the will. However, there are common elements which bear noting: first, Nietzsche surprisingly asserted that there is no such thing as will, that it has no concrete existence. Virtually all aspects of life exist in a complex web of relationships, and what we perceive as will is simply the result of the sensation of command dominating the other sensations:

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[69] See Morse Peckham, Art and Pornography: An Experiment in Explanation (New York: Basic, 1969), p. 227.

> [The] "freedom of will"...is the expression for that complex condition of joy of the person who wills, who commands and at the same time identifies himself with the executor of the command.[70]

The perfect expression of this notion of will as dominant sensation of command is to be found in those Supermen who have been able to cast off all other commands. It is for this reason that the Superman's will must achieve supremacy over such things as the commands of bourgeois society in the form of conventional morality:

> Every morality is...a piece of tyranny against nature.... The essential and invaluable element in every morality is that it is a protracted constraint.[71]

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[70] Nietzsche, Beyond Good and Evil (1886), section 19. See The Basic Writings of Nietzsche, ed. and trans. W. Kaufmann (New York: Modern Library, 1968), pp. 215-16. This is rather like Breton's statement:

> Human life would not be for many of us the disappointment that it is if we constantly felt capable of accomplishing acts above our strength.

This is quoted, with no source given, in Henri Peyre, "The Significance of Surrealism," Yale French Studies, I, no. 2 (Fall-Winter, 1948), p. 49. Peyre maintains that Surrealism's aim was not exactly to create a Nietzschean Superman, but to give a noble and affirmative answer to the Nietzschean question "Of what is a man capable?"

[71] Beyond Good and Evil, section 188 (Basic Writings, p. 290).

This is precisely the same sentiment that is to be found in "Hands Off Love" (see above and note 42) and in numerous published statements by individual artists, almost all of which concern sexuality. For example, André Masson, who had read Nietzsche by the time he was sixteen years old,[72] agreed with the German philosopher that the basis of behaviour was desire:

> At the beginning of all things is the subterranean world of unsatisfied instinct. Here resounds the great voice of Friedrich Nietzsche, wondering what would happen if all our instincts had to be satisfied as radically as hunger.[73]

And even René Magritte agreed with Nietzsche's assertion that Raphael had painted his many famous Madonnas chiefly because of an "overheated sexual system."[74] This confirms our reading of Ernst's "Cézanne and Rosa Bonheur" in terms of the will to power, strong but sublimated into creativity, as well as beginning to establish the relation of will to automatism. Will, now understood as the transgression of constraints by an appeal to presumed instincts, is not that far from automatism, which proceeds towards the same destination on a slightly different, but parallel route.[75] Even André Breton, who originally detested Nietzsche, finally recognized this when he later wrote:

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[72] André Masson, Entretiens avec Georges Charbonnier (Paris: Julliard, 1958), p. 48.

[73] Masson, Anatomy of My Universe, paragraph III.

[74] Magritte, "La Ligne de Vie, I," in Ecrits complèts, p. 112; see also "L'Art bourgeois," in the same anthology, p. 133. The Nietzschean original is in The Will to Power, book III, section 800 (Works, XV, p. 243).

> Nietzsche's whole enterprise...is nothing other than giving back to man all the power that he has been capable of attributing to the name of God. *It is possible for the ego to dissolve* at this temperature.[76]

The transcendence of discursive thought is thus intimately linked to the transgression of conventional dualities like good and evil. The title of Nietzsche's *Beyond Good and Evil*, like that of the first plate of Ernst's *La Femme 100 Têtes*, "Crime or Miracle: a Complete Man,"[77] signifies the disdain that Supermen have for bourgeois morality. Unfortunately, this disdain extends to women as well, for as Nietzsche writes:

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[75] Carrouges, *Basic Concepts*, p. 110f, finds the essence of automatism in this quotation from Nietzsche: "With an indescribable certainty and clarity, something becomes visible, is heard... One does not search, one takes." The source is not given.

[76] André Breton, *Anthologie de l'Humour noir* (Paris: Sagittaire, 1940), p. 97. The italics are mine.

[77] This is discussed in Stokes, "*La Femme 100 Têtes* by Max Ernst," pp. 105-108, as providing a Nietzschean key to the whole collage-novel. See also Renée Riese-Hubert, "Images du criminel et du héros surréalistes," *Mélusine, No. I: Emission-Réception* (Lausanne: Editions l'age d'homme, 1979), pp. 187-198. In the latter, various anti-female acts are initiated by artists who see themselves beyond morality and even causality. Their *actes gratuits* serve to force the spectator into the role of voyeur.

> A man...must always think about women as the Orientals do: he must conceive of woman as a possession, as property that can be locked, as something predestined for service and achieving her perfection in that.[78]

The Surrealist conception of this service is, first and foremost, sexual, as has been seen in Ernst and in a drawing by Dalí, in which a male key disdains a female lock in favour of an orifice which does not possess any threatening female reproductive power (fig. 49). Clearly, Dalí's rejection of sexual reproduction--that is, the Nietzschean woman's only real weapon--is complete. The foundations of this total rejection are in Nietzsche, but the thoroughness of it goes well beyond the German philosopher's intentions, for he did confirm that reproduction was a necessity.[79] The next stages in the Surrealist project were inspired by other literary sources.

c) Baudelaire

The complete man (the Übermensch, the Surrealist) required the sexual availability of subordinate females to maintain his sensation of command. Rejecting marriage as bourgeois, at least in theory, the Surrealist seeking completion either had to await passively the advent of the unique woman, as in the case of Breton, or to pursue more actively some female stimulus to superiority. One easy solution to the latter was to become a patron of the brothel, a solution that Breton rejected, provoking dissensions within Surrealism which were ultimately a greater crisis than the various political disagreements which are usually given as the sole cause of one excommunication or another.[80] Interestingly, Baudelaire provided a literary vindication of those in favour of the brothel, and the text in which he did so was about a visual artist, the Painter of Modern Life. Not only did he foresee the stereotypy of Bertillon (discussed in Chapter I) in his assertion that "each human being bears the distinct stamp of his trade,"[81] he also expressly linked prostitution with civil disobedience, noting that "all the various types of fallen womanhood" were in "revolt against society."[82] (One presumes that a similar sentiment hides behind the choice of a Baudelairean caption for the homage to Germaine Berthon, fig. 43). The bourgeois males of the nineteenth century who frequented brothels were also in revolt, after a fashion, but they did not consider their prostitutes as full-fledged human beings. Instead, they were merely "fleshy conveniences"[83] assisting in the male's struggles against moral constraints.

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[78] Beyond Good and Evil, part 7, section 238 (Basic Writings, p. 357).

[79] However, this was allowed only within a hierarchical family of sorts, in which duty suppresses emotion, men suppress women, parents suppress children, and so on. See the illuminating discussions in Ofelia Schutte, Beyond Nihilism: Nietzsche Without Masks (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), pp. 176-185; and Sarah Kofman, Nietzsche et la scène philosophique (Paris: Union général d'éditions, 1979), pp. 163-304.

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[80] Breton himself was able to verify that the majority of quarrels, often attributed to politics or personality differences, were caused by "un désaccord irréductible" on the question of love. See the "Ajours" section of his Arcane 17 (Paris: Pauvert, 1965), p. 146. The first edition (New York: Brentano's, 1945) does not include the remark.

[81] Charles Baudelaire, The Painter of Modern Life (1863) and Other Essays, ed. and trans. J. Mayne (London: Phaidon, 1964), p. 36.

[82] Ibid., p. 37.

The Surrealists were of the same mind, but they took the pedestrian--even tawdry--details of contemporary life and subjected them to a veritable apotheosis. In this manner, for example, Louis Aragon lamented the passing of the bordello in the Galerie du Baromètre, which was bathed along with everything else in the Passage de l'Opéra in a mysterious light.[84] In fact, the decline of the brothel in general was an exactly contemporary phenomenon,[85] not necessarily linked to specific urban renewal projects like that which destroyed Aragon's Passage, the extension of the

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[83] Apparently, the eighteenth century term for whore meant "fleshy convenience," but it seems equally applicable to the nineteenth century. See Leonard de Vries and Peter Fryer, Venus Unmasked (London: Arthur Barker, 1967), p. 25.

[84] Aragon, Paris Peasant, passim. This is further developed in Chapter IV.

[85] Léon Bizard, La vie des femmes (Paris: Grasset, 1934), p. 203.

Boulevard Haussmann.[86] Replacing the brothel was a new type of prostitution, street solicitation, the practitioners of which were often confused with the sexually-liberated young women who sat alone in cafés, drank cocktails, drove their own cars and practised other such supposedly unfeminine things.[87] Many of these women may have been demi-prostitutes, and some of them were certainly secretaries.[88] Perhaps not surprisingly then, this creature, half-young woman and half-whore, became a visionary being of sorts, holding the key to a superior world of delights which was to be entered only through some form of revolt--moral, Surrealist, or simply occupational. Surrealist writing is full of chance encounters in the street with such significant women. Even Breton acknowledged that the "enchantments that the street outside had to offer me were a thousand times more real"[89] than the elevated enticements of, say, a museum. Moreover, the most enchanting women for Breton, while not actually prostitutes, were those who stood a little apart from their bourgeois counterparts on the sidewalk. One need only recall his meeting with the enigmatic Nadja, one which seemed temporarily to fulfill his desire for a marvellous woman who could reveal some of the strange, but not supernatural, details of the city streets hitherto overlooked.[90] Such women, then, were worthy subjects of exaltation, for whether or not they were sexually exploited, they provided an entrance to a superior sort of reality. In other words, they assisted the *Übermensch*-Surrealist in recreating his everyday world. As Aragon put it, woman takes

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[86] A full description of the Passage and the project which destroyed it in 1925 is given in Johann Friedrich Geist, Arcades: The History of a Building Type, trans. J. O. Newman and J. H. Smith (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1983), pp. 476-485. The brothel may have been no. 3, Galerie du Baromètre. Aragon's description is discussed on pp. 116-17.

[87] Corbin, p. 110, marks 1925 as the first great increase in street solicitation. Cheques were even accepted.

[88] Benét, p. 53.

[89] Breton, Le Surréalisme et la peinture, p. 3.

> the place of all substance.... Thus the universe little by little dissolves, while from its depths rises an adorable phantom.[91]

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[90] Breton, *Nadja*, p. 64 gives the account of their first meeting on the street. Breton had earlier expressed the hope of meeting a beautiful naked woman by chance, but he had rejected the one case in which he saw a naked woman in a theatre known for illicit sexual rendezvous (p. 39). He had no choice but to take his quest to the street. The virtual mythology of the city streets thus created, with specific references to sexuality and the like, is fully discussed in Marie-Claire Bancquart, *Paris des Surréalistes* (Paris: Seghers, 1972). See also the important essay by Norbert Bandier, "Les surréalistes et la ville: note pour une compréhension du theme de la ville dans la revue *La Révolution Surréaliste*," in N. Bandier, F. Gilbert and A. Micoud, eds., *La Parole de la Ville: Espace et Socialisation* (Lyon: Presses Universitaires de Lyon, 1980), pp. 11-45. Salvador Dalí has told a curious story about grotesque cruelties mentally inflicted upon the bodies of women who passed him in the street. See his *Unspeakable Confessions*, p. 80.

[91] Aragon, *Paris Peasant*, p. 209.

In such a mysterious light, the Surrealist seems to make whores of all women. Despite their exaltation they are "fleshy conveniences", stepping stones to a new perception of the world.

The roots of this seeming paradox can be found in Baudelaire. A woman, he had written, is the source of all lasting delights. She is more than a female human; she is a divinity, a star, an idol. But although she is more than mere nature, she is refused the right to an intellectual or cultural identity. Her only recourse is to the magic of cosmetics, which lift her above nature by correcting her flaws with face paint and fashion. Baudelaire goes so far as to assert that self-adornment, even in primitive societies, indicates a disgust with the real--an eminently Surrealist sentiment. Among the better practitioners of the cosmetic arts are those whose occupations equally reject the real: actresses and prostitutes, both objects of public pleasure. Neither of these types are particularly cultural, except insofar as their association is a type of "picture-gallery,"[92] for they are "a perfect image of the savagery that lurks in the midst of civilization."[93]

In the Surrealist visual arts, there is precious little that might properly be called an image of a prostitute,[94] but there are many that identify women as a savage beast, either representing a direct, unleashed threat to the presumably male viewer (figs. 9-11, 31, 33) or in the process of being subdued (fig. 50). The latter is an unprecedented scene of animalistic rape, inspired by André Masson's interest in a relief sculpture of a dying lioness.[95] The arrows which penetrate the beast in the relief have been replaced by an equally penetrating male nude in Masson's drawing. The fallacy lying behind such a drawing is the result of a conflation of elements drawn from Baudelaire (the savage woman) and Nietzsche (sexual appetite is like hunger and must be satisfied). The religious significance of the cycle of birth-death-birth, which gives real depth to commonplace associations of Eros and Thanatos, or sex and death,[96] is obscured by Masson's use of the imagination to achieve a Nietzschean goal. A non-nationalist, the artist had entered the Great War as a test of self, of will,[97] but he found himself confronted by the real face of death in the form of a dead soldier frozen in a position that he had though was beckoning. He suddenly thought of the dying lioness image, as if an aesthetic point of view were needed to combat the onset of wartime madness.[98] The drawing, made more than two decades later, illustrates a similar process: the threatening savagery of the female is defeated by the nominally aesthetic act of killing or subduing her through a sexual aggression which is itself conceived as a natural extension of normal instincts. Masson has increased his own sensation of command--that is, his Nietzschean will--by beating down the threatening female savage. In assuming this process to be natural, he has failed to recognize that the characteristics of sexual identity and sex drive are largely sociocultural. Masson, as noted above, agreed with Nietzsche that all our instincts must be satisfied like hunger. The sex/hunger analogy has been firmly entrenched in cultural attitudes for perhaps centuries, but there are serious flaws in the argument. The lack of food kills, whereas the lack of sex does not. Tissue deterioration results from too little food or too much sex, but never from no sex. The satisfaction of hunger preserves the individual, whereas the satisfaction of the sexual urge is presumably aimed at the preservation of the species. To insist that sexual satisfaction is a need is to confuse one's individual, selfish desires with the non-individual necessity of contributing to the genetic pool, as it were.[99]

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[92] Baudelaire, Painter of Modern Life, p. 37.

[93] Ibid., p. 36.

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[94] That is, aside from those photographic images which include nudes who may or may not have been prostitutes. Two possible examples of photographs of streetwalkers are an anonymous photo entitled "Versailles," (fig. 84), and an anonymous photo subjected to Salvador Dalí's paranoiac-critical activity in his "Psychologie non-Euclidienne d'une photographie," Minotaure, no. 7, 2nd year (June, 1935), p. 57.

[95] The Dying Lioness is a relief from Kuyunjik of c.650 B.C., now in the British Museum. It is discussed and reproduced in Henri Frankfort, The Art and Architecture of the Ancient Orient, 4th ed. (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1959), p. 100, plate 111a.

[96] As in the discussion of this drawing and relief in William Rubin, "André Masson and Twentieth Century Painting," in Rubin and Lanchner, p. 30.

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[97] See the interview in Clébert, p. 20, in which this decision is linked to his discovery of Nietzsche.

[98] Rubin, "André Masson and Twentieth Century Painting," p. 30, says as much, but he fails to see the dark implications behind the exquisite evocations of the drawing. Masson's wartime account continues in Clébert, p. 22, while on p. 21 he explicitly associates cruelty with painterly activity.

Another, more subtle, way to control the female savage is to manipulate her image through fashion and cosmetics. There was a great concern with these cultural ephemera among some Surrealists, particularly Salvador Dalí, who loved to emphasize the wearer of his designs as an object of public pleasure, still in the Baudelairean sense. Of places in which the public could indulge itself in such socially acceptable voyeurism, there was perhaps none better than the New York State World's Fair of 1939, for which Dalí designed revealing costumes--sometimes characterized as

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[99] Frank A. Beach, "Characteristics of Masculine Sex Drive," Nebraska Symposium on Motivation, IV (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1956), pp. 1-32. The opposite point of view is presented in Robert O. Blood, Anticipating Your Marriage (Glencoe, Illinois: Free Press, 1955), pp. 113-15.

"anti-clothing"[100]--for his Dream of Venus pavillion (fig. 51). Another function of such fashions is clearly to identify the wearer as one who operates outside the restrictions of normal bourgeois morality. The most ambiguous aspect of the woman's outfit is the lobster which sits on her lap. It may have psychological implications: its claws are castration threats *par excellence*. Moreover, it also confirms the anonymous, masked sexual availability advocated by the Surrealists, for a remarkable parallel can be established with some of the fashion eccentricities and fetishes of the nineteenth century. The strangest costume habits of that era were surely corset-wearing and tight-lacing. The latter, which led to the common designation "wasp waist", was often caricatured in this way with allusions to the animal world. The most striking illustration of this is a design for a dining-dress in the form of a lobster, originally printed in *Punch* in 1867 (fig. 52). The young lady even sports a fork in her coiffure, which is not unlike the cutlery sometimes seen in Dalí's works.[101] As David Kunzle has noted in a fascinating study of _Fashion and Fetishism_, the lobster dress and the tight-lacing which gave birth to it were satires of a fashion language, a discourse which consisted of the refusal to accept bourgeois definitions of female sexuality as entirely subordinate to the cycle of marriage and childbearing.[102] This is, of course, the thrust of "Hands Off Love." It seems also to be the signification of Dalí's costume, though it is not certain that he knew the illustration in _Punch_.[103] In fact, the Spanish artist has always recognized the possibility of fashionable fetishes: he has made, for instance, designs for a lobster dress-pattern for the couturier Elsa Schiaparelli.[104] The most extreme example of his fetish-fashions is a hat in the shape of a high-heeled shoe (fig. 53),[105] which alludes to the well-known foot fixations often described as peculiar to the Spanish mentality.[106] In Dalí's case, the foot fetish is expressly linked to Surrealism as a practical mode of living. To automatism and all the other aspects of the Surrealist way of life, Dalí added his concept of the Surrealist object of symbolic function. Such objects "depend only upon the amorous imagination of each individual" and are symbolic realizations of sexual desire founded upon the presumed analogies between the act of making poetry and sexual perversion.[107] Dalí's example included a woman's shoe containing a glass of warm milk and a substance resembling excrement, as well as a sugar cube painted with another shoe, which would vanish when the sugar was lowered into the milk.

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[100] Benayoun, pp. 78-9 described the peek-a-boo effect of such clothes as "*l'anti-brassière chez Dalí*." He suggested that a strange anti-brassière worn by a Congolese dancer may have been an influence, because it appeared to support the breasts without covering them. He erred in several respects: first, the dancer is a Dogon from West Sudan; second, the anti-brassière is not an item of clothing but a part of a religious ceremonial costume; and third, the wearer is not female at all--in fact, women who came in contact with such disguised males risked sterility or spontaneous abortion. Dalí may have been influenced by the image without understanding its import, for it was reproduced in Michel Leiris, "Masques Dogon," *Minotaure*, no. 2 (16 June, 1933), p. 51. See also the discussion concerning the androgyne in chapter II.

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[101] Spoons appear with the greatest frequency. See the dozens affixed to the otherwise mostly nude mannekin that Dalí contributed to the _Passage des Panoramas_ in the _Exposition International du Surréalisme_ (Paris, Galerie Beaux-Arts, January-February, 1938). A photograph is reproduced in _La Vie publique_, p. 69, fig. 487.

[102] David Kunzle, _Fashion and Fetishism: A Social History of the Corset, Tight-Lacing and Other Forms of Body-Sculpture in the West_ (Totowa, New Jersey: Rowman and Littlefield, 1982), pp. 299-300. Kunzle's thesis is opposite to what one might expect: he interprets the corset and its relatives not as symptoms of sexist oppression but as expressions of yearning for liberation. The _Punch_ design is reproduced in plate 35. Interestingly, Kunzle has traced the corset motif in Baudelaire's _Fleurs du Mal_ of 1857. See his "The corset as erotic alchemy," in Thomas B. Hess and Linda Nochlin, eds., _Woman as Sex Object: Art News Annual_, no. 38 (London: Allen Lane, 1973), pp. 111-113. There is even an illustration of Baudelaire's mistress, Jeanne Duval, in a corset (p. 134). She is accompanied by the caption, "seeking whom she may devour."

[103] The artist has refused to answer several direct requests concerning the image, possibly because of declining health or the intrigues of his present and former secretaries.

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[104] This was around 1937. See the illustration from Harper's Bazaar reproduced in Richard Martin, "Some Lobsters, Some Elephants: Surrealist Reflections on Joseph Cornell's A Pantry Ballet (for Jacques Offenbach)," Arts Magazine, LX, no. 6 (February, 1986), p. 31. The article includes some hypotheses concerning the origin of the lobster fetish, but they are largely unconvincing. Equally interesting but inconclusive are remarks concerning the edibility of both lobsters and women (!) in Gauthier, pp. 117-8. See also the remark on Dalí's fetishization of Freud's studies of the nervous tissue of crayfish in Fleur Cowles, The Case of Salvador Dalí (Boston: Little, Brown, 1959), p. 295.

[105] Interestingly, this design was re-used in an English film by American expatriate Terry Gilliam, director, Brazil (Universal Studios, 1985). It was worn by the mother of the principal character.

[106] Much is made, for instance, of the fetishism of film-maker Luis Buñuel, which he has confirmed very succinctly in his autobiography My Last Sigh, p. 242. Similar comments have been made about Joan Miró--see Rubin, Miró, p. 70--but Miró himself preferred to think of his images of feet as links with the telluric forces of the soil. See Jacques Dupin, Joan Miró: Life and Work, trans. N. Guterman (New York: Abrams, 1962), p. 132.

The point to all of these willing and--if it need be emphasized--conscious allusions on the part of Dalí is that a fetishized costume creates a fetishized body. In other words, fashion becomes a language of sorts, part of the function of which is to double or compound or even create a sexual significance for non-sexual parts of the body. Fetishism consists of the frustration of a developing sexual aim in such a way that later satisfaction can only be achieved with a "symbol of the possibility" of normal fulfilment; one associates sexual gratification with a shoe, say, or a piece of fur, rather than with the "complete sexual object as embodied in another person."[108] Surrealist fetishism complicates this superficially straightfoward set of relations by making the other person--that is, the complete sexual object--a symbol of the possibility of an impossible sexual gratification which transcends the bodily limitations of any individual. The whole body thus becomes subject to a game of erotogenic hide-and-seek, as in a Dalí drawing of 1931 (fig. 54), but the sexual gratification is that of the fetishist, not the fetishized.[109] This condition is an enforced polymorphous perversity, an eroticization of a person whose already "complete" sexuality is denied. Fashion participates in this process by ceaselessly producing a vocabulary of intuitively understood sexual signifiers. This is not only to be found in the work of Dalí, for his influence was strong on Tristan Tzara, who wrote an essay examining the sexual symbolism of certain hats.[110] Neither Dalí nor Tzara, whose main point was simply that some hats have distinctly vaginal indentations (fig. 55) while others seem made of some strange erectile tissue, could ever have recognized that what they were actually proposing was a decidedly undemocratic systematization of a fashion language. Saussurean linguistics has long distinguished between langue (language) and parole (speech): the former constitutes an abstract set of signs and rules, the possibility of a system of values and even a social institution. The latter, on the other hand, is an individual's selection or use of the former, with a view to expression of some personal thought or sentiment. Fashion can be described in these terms: clothes that are represented by words or photographs remain a language, as in the case of high fashion magazines and Dalí's designs. Such clothes are never really worn by the individuals who would, in so doing, make a true speech.[111]

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[107] "L'incarnation de ces désirs, leur manière de s'objectiver par substitution et métaphore, leur réalisation symbolique constituent le processus type de la perversion sexuelle, lequelle ressemble, en tous points, au processus du fait poétique [Dalí's italics]." Dalí, "Objects Surréalistes," p. 16. That the object was conceived of as an alternative method to dream recitation and automatism is confirmed in Dalí's La Vie Secrète, p. 325. The actual object described in the text is reproduced in Ades, Dalí, fig. 129.

[108] As succinctly described in David Stafford-Clark, What Freud Really Said (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 196), p. 103.

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[109] Sexual activity which involves false orifices like armpits, below the breasts, the thighs, and so on is statistically said to give pleasure only very rarely indeed to the passive party, the overwhelming majority of whom are female in heterosexual situations. See Clifford Allen, "Perversions, Sexual," in Albert Ellis and Albert Abarbanel, eds., The Encyclopedia of Sexual Behavior (New York: Hawthorn Books, 1961), vol. II, p. 804.

[110] "D'un certain Automatisme du Goût," Minotaure, no. 3-4 (14 December, 1933), pp. 81-4. Tzara's language in this article is full of the intra-uterine this and the pre-natal that cropping up so often in Dalí's writings.

Women who are dressed by men remain "fleshy conveniences" of a sort. A woman who is dressed by a Surrealist is, like painting was to Breton, "a lamentable expedient"[112]--lamentable because of the ever-present threat of pregnancy. To avoid this threat, one must force women to become polymorphously perverse--that is, open to non-genital sexuality. This can involve a great deal of curiosity and experimentation, one model for which can again be found in Baudelaire's Painter of Modern Life. We find there that the mainspring of the modern artist's genius is curiosity and that when this curiosity is sufficiently driven, it becomes passion. Baudelaire continued to the effect that the proper state of mind for this curiosity/ passion to flower is a synthesis of the states of mind of the child and the convalescent. Just as a man who is close to death drinks in his environment as if each glance were his last, Baudelaire noted, the child's intense rapport with his surroundings is like a type of drunkenness. In both cases, the impressions received are like convulsions or nervous shocks. The state of mind of the convalescent/child is a state of mere sensibility, whereas adulthood is a matter of reason and analysis.[113] We have already seen how André Breton, unlike Baudelaire, suggested that the Surrealist remain in childhood in order to triumph over the deceptive flaws of rationality. Moreover, it must be noted that Breton's very conceptions of the Surrealist image and of beauty are precisely a matter of convulsions or shocks of this sort: "Beauty will be convulsive or it will not be," he writes, and elsewhere: "The value of the image depends upon the beauty of the spark obtained."[114] If we continue to read backwards into Baudelaire, so to speak, we realize that a Surrealist, who is in some ways both child and convalescent, is possessed of an impassioned curiosity which excuses all excesses, for irrational beings (or beings of mere sensibility) have no moral guidelines of right and wrong. There is only an act informed by the drive to know, without consideration of the repercussions of that act, provided that it generates the convulsion, the spark--what Victor Hugo once described as Baudelaire's *frisson nouveau* or new shudder.[115] This explains the fascination with which the Surrealists greeted more celebrated works by the Romantic poet, like his *Fleurs du mal* (1857), which is liberally sown with images of horrible beauty. Baudelaire did his best to project ever-new, ever-surprising images of evil into his work in the presumption that the imagination is morally autonomous and that the artist relieves or purges humanity of its evil impulses by embracing them himself. The Surrealists retained the former presumption but discarded the cathartic flavour of the second in their dizzying search downwards, as it were, for the *frissons* which lurked within themselves. During their descent, they discovered a model for a type of image which could regularize the production of poetic convulsions. The model was literary, but the light in which it was bathed was

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[111] The roots of this line of reasoning were suggested by Roland Barthes, "Elements of Semiology," in his Writing Degree Zero and Elements of Semiology, trans. A. Lavers and C. Smith (Boston: Beacon, 1970), pp. 13-27.

[112] Breton, Le Surréalisme et la peinture, p. 6.

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[113] Baudelaire, Painter of Modern Life, pp. 7-8.

[114] The first quotation is the last line of Breton's Nadja, p. 160. The second is in the "Manifesto," p. 37. See also the anonymous photograph resembling an electrical discharge, published with the caption "L'image, telle qu'elle se produit dans l'écriture automatique," in Breton's "La Beauté sera convulsive," p. 10.

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[115] See the discussion in Praz, pp. 141-153.

Freud's.[116]

d) From Hoffmann to Freud

It seems odd that the Surrealists would take inspiration from the tales of E. T. A. Hoffmann, whose name, after all, was placed on the "Don't Read" list of 1931[117]--but this did not stop Dalí from reading Krafft-Ebing, Breton from reading Taine, nor Miró from reading Lévy-Bruhl. Moreover, the father of psychoanalysis had given his stamp of approval to Hoffmann when he discussed the German writer-composer's tale of 1816, "The Sandman," specifically within the context of the convulsive image. Freud never referred to the Baudelairean notion of *frissons*, but what he extracted from the tale is essentially the same in all important respects. To this psychic state of estrangement, of disquieting strangeness, he gave the name *Unheimlichkeit*, "the Uncanny."[118] The Surrealists seized this opportunity to cultivate anxiety as a new form of the frisson. Importantly, the source of the emotion was often found in the streets, as it had been for Baudelaire. Breton, for example, acknowledged with pleasure that "the statue of Etienne Dolet on its plinth in the place Maubert in Paris has always fascinated me and induced unbearable discomfort," but he refused any possibility of a psychoanalytic cure of his anxiety, believing that there was no simple objective reason for the phenomenon.[119] Essentially the same experience of unease provoked by the commonplace had been felt by one of the Surrealists' guiding lights, Giorgio de Chirico, who felt that the silence, solitude and obscurity of deserted Italian piazze gave rise to a curious amalgam of aesthetic sentiment and psychic distress.[120] He too described statues in public places as particularly evocative, though he preferred that they not be on high plinths, like the Dolet mentioned by Breton, so that they could potentially rise and enter the world of men. This confusion of animate and inanimate is precisely what Freud had described as the primary criterion for the generation of the Uncanny.[121] Hoffmann's "The Sandman" provided the source.

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[116] Fowlie, pp. 26-7, says essentially that the Freudian influence on the Surrealists, and its psychoanalytical implications of a cathartic cure, means that the young Frenchmen *accepted* the cathartic aesthetic formula espoused by Baudelaire. That this is not so is demonstrated clearly in the "Manifesto" (p. 26: "exempt from any aesthetic or moral concern") and in Breton and Aragon's assertion that hysteria is not pathological but poetic (see their "Le Cinquantenaire de l'hystérie," p. 22).

[117] Cowling, "An other culture," p. 456.

[118] Sigmund Freud, "The Uncanny," *S.E.*, XVII, pp. 234-9.

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[119] Breton, Nadja, p. 24 and plate 3. The monument was destroyed by the Nazis in World War II.

[120] Giorgio de Chirico, "Sull'arte metafisica," Valori Plastici, no. 3 (April-May, 1919), pp. 15-19. This is translated in Carrà, pp. 87-91.

The protagonist of this curious account, a characteristically German Gothic tale of melancholy and strangeness, is Nathaniel, a young man broodingly sensitive to the presence of evil. In itself, his is an early example of the exacerbated sensibility to the convulsive nature of beauty as it would later be formulated by Edgar Allan Poe (see chapter I) and after him by Baudelaire and Breton. As a result of this morbid sensitivity to the new shudder, Nathaniel becomes infatuated with an oddly unnerving but beautiful young girl, Olympia Spalanzani. He soon discovers that she is not at all what he had thought, for he watches in stunned disbelief as Coppelius, with whom he had identified the Sandman of his youth, forcibly steals Olympia from her home. It is only when he is struck by her discarded eyes, thrown by the enraged victim of the theft, that he realizes she is an automaton, a mechanical doll. Not capable of accepting this new knowledge, Nathaniel loses his sanity, eventually trying to throw his former lover, a girl named Klara, from the top of a tower. Klara is rescued by her brother, but Nathaniel leaps to his death, as if lured by the voice of Coppelius, the Sandman watching from below.[122]

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[121] De Chirico had also used Freudian phrases like "infantile anxiety." A full discussion of the interrelations is Jean Clair, "Metafisica et Unheimlichkeit," in Les Réalismes, 1919-39 (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 17 December, 1980-20 April, 1981), pp. 26-34.

One can easily see why such a tale would appeal to the Surrealists and to de Chirico, whose works before 1917 were so similar in spirit to what Breton was trying to achieve after 1924 that he called the painter a fixed point on the straight line ahead of him--that is, a milestone on his path.[123] The Sandman's role is to lull his victims to sleep--metaphorically to their deaths, like Nathaniel--but the Surrealist does not want to sleep. He prefers to stay awake while enjoying the freedom of the unconscious world. To preserve this delicate balance, the Surrealist must retain a sense of the uncanny, an unnerving anxiety like that generated in the story by Olympia. He must, therefore, succeed where Nathaniel failed, tossing Klara to her death and escaping the Sandman. Poetically understood, the Surrealist has to ignore the substance of the real women about him, substituting for them a mechanistic female whose witless and soulless state makes her into a perfect receptacle for the projection of the Surrealist's desires. The path towards this goal was arduous, but others had pursued it before them. One such was the novelist Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, in whose L'Eve future a female robot figured prominently. She had been built for a young man whose real love was a celestial beauty who could not meet his *intellectual* requirements.[124] There is a good deal of thinly veiled misogyny in such an undertaking, for a fictional inventor named after Thomas Edison perfectly recreates the real woman's beauty, discarding her bourgeois vacuity, her insensitivity to art, her avarice and her stupidity.[125] Edison leaves the robot empty, presumably retaining only what is good or positive in women, so that his client can project his ideal into it.[126] The robot's name, incidentally, was *Halady*, a Persian word meaning "ideal".[127]

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[122] I have used the translation in The Tales of Hoffmann, ed. and trans. L. J. Kent and E. C. Knight (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1972), pp. 93-125.

[123] Breton, Le Surréalisme et la peinture, p. 13.

The Surrealists may have interpreted this as some modern critics have done, as a sign of secularized faith in the occult--what might be called an earthbound metaphysics inasmuch as it seems to propose a mechanical solution to the antithesis of mind and body.[128] Unfortunately, this interpretation still cannot alter the fact that Villiers subscribed wholeheartedly to the male-culture/female-nature dichotomy.[129] Ironically, it is a mechanism, an automatically functioning device, that is now understood as natural because it has no cerebral--that is, cultural--functions. Such a willing subordination of the possibility of a female psychology to her presumed physical reality is a commonplace of male attitudes at the turn of the century. The steam locomotive, for example, had been called "the woman born without a mother or father,"[130] which inevitably recalls the later Fille née sans mère (1915) of Francis Picabia. Picabia's little mechanical woman, like her near relative, Marcel Duchamp's Bride (1912), indicates that pre-Surrealist artists were, like Villiers, less interested in the female mind than in illustrating sexual disfunction, frustration, alienation, absurdity, and even the symptomatic association of pleasure and punishment.[131] The main influences on these two artists are usually said to be Alfred Jarry's Le Surmâle of 1902 and Raymond Roussel's Impressions d'Afrique of 1910. The former included a young woman, Ellen Elson, who built a love-inspiring machine so that she could seduce the world's greatest lover. The latter included an equally clever young woman with mechanical lungs, Louise Montalescot.[132] Surprisingly, however, neither of these literary creations are as devoid of feminine personality as the images of Picabia and Duchamp. At best, the artists have appropriated the mechanical image for its metaphorical possibilities; as far as the notion of femininity is concerned, within those possibilities, neither artist goes much beyond Villiers' equation of real female witlessness with purely mechanical devices. Mind you, this is not to say that there is no other serious purpose behind their works.[133]

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[124] J.M.M.P.A. de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam, *L'Eve future* (1885-6), reprinted in *Oeuvres Complètes* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1914-31), vol. I, p. 73.

[125] Ibid., pp. 220-6, 235-40, 334, 337, 339 and elsewhere.

[126] Ibid., pp. 135-6.

[127] See the discussion in William T. Conroy, Jr., *Villiers de l'Isle-Adam* (Boston: Twayne, 1978), pp. 109-15.

[128] Ibid., and cf. Maria Deene, *Le merveilleux dans l'oeuvre de Villiers de l'Isle-Adam* (Paris: Courville, 1939), pp. 83-5.

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[129] On the misogynistic character of the novel in general, see Deenen, ibid., pp. 149-56. A thorough study of both Hoffmann and Villiers is Peter Gendolla, Die Lebenden Maschinen: Zur Geschichte der Maschinenmenschen bei Jean Paul, E.T.A. Hoffmann und Villiers de l'Isle-Adam (Marburg/Lahn: Guttandin und Hoppe, 1980), pp. 140-217.

[130] Claude Quiguer, Femmes et machines de 1900: Lecture d'une obsession modern' style (Paris: Klincksieck, 1979), p. 251.

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[131] There are dozens of publications on these so-called mechanomorphic works. Two of the most thorough are William A. Camfield, Francis Picabia: His Art, Life and Times (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979), pp. 71-90; and Arturo Schwarz, The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp (New York: Abrams, 1969), pp. 79-189. See also the important discussion in Pierre Restany, "Des machines célibataires aux machines inutiles," XXe siecle, XXXVI, no. 42 (June, 1974), pp. 132-40, in which it is suggested that optimistic faith in the machine ends completely in Surrealism, being replaced only with fear and mistrust. Still of some importance is Michel Carrouges' 1954 study Les Machines célibataires, revised ed. (Paris: Chêne, 1976).

[132] See the English translations: Alfred Jarry, The Supermale: a modern novel, trans. B. Wright (London: Jonathan Cape, 1968); Raymond Roussel, Impressions of Africa, trans. L. Foord and R. Heppenstall (London: Calder and Boyars, 1966). Jarry may have been a vehement misogynist: see Nigey Lennon, Alfred Jarry: the Man with the Axe (Los Angeles: Panjandrum, 1984), pp. 73-9. Roussel's method was a matter of linguistic play, so such an accusation is very difficult to make in his case. See is own Comment j'ai écrit certains de mes livres (Paris: Pauvert, 1963).

Benjamin Péret, one of the more significant Surrealist poets, went several strides beyond the pre-Surrealist artists by wedding to the automaton the Freudian notion of the Uncanny. In a curious article which brings together in discussion the inventors of various automata from different historical periods, Péret attempted implicitly to blur the boundaries between the animate and the inanimate. Automata occupy what he called a "paradise of phantoms," a twilight realm of furtive shadows.[134] In keeping with the Bretonian dogma that "the marvellous is always beautiful, anything marvellous is beautiful, in fact only the marvellous is beautiful" ("Manifesto," p. 14), Péret ended his strange dialogue by referring to a famous writing-automaton built by the eighteenth-century inventor Jaquet-Droz. Capable of endlessly writing messages like "We are androids" and more importantly the word "Merveilleux", the automaton was therefore perfectly beautiful, for it blurred the distinctions between animate and inanimate, reason and automatism.[135]

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[133] Duchamp's Bride Stripped Bare by her Bachelors, Even (1915-23) has been interpreted many times with reference to the occult traditions. See Schwarz, passim, and Jack Burnham, "Duchamp's Bride stripped bare: the meaning of the Large Glass," in his Great Western Salt Works (New York: Braziller, 1974), pp. 89-117. Some of these should be taken with a grain of salt.

[134] Benjamin Péret, "Au Paradis des Fantômes," Minotaure, no. 3-4, (14 December, 1933), p. 30. The article is liberally illustrated with photographs from Edouard Gélis and Alfred Chapuis, Le Monde des Automates (Paris and Neuchâtel: Gélis and Chapuis, 1928).

Péret clearly agreed with Breton that beauty will be convulsive and that only the marvellous is beautiful. He also borrowed from Breton the phantom-like image of his marvellous beings, for the pope of Surrealism had written that the marvellous was not the same in every period of history, sometimes manifesting itself in romantic ruins populated by ghosts.[136] In almost the same breath, Breton touched on yet another response to the problem of the Uncanny: like romantic ruins, the modern mannekin was an expression of the marvellous ("Manifesto," p. 16). In this, Breton borrowed in turn from de Chirico, whose celebrated mannekin pictures were the first innovative solution to the problem posed by Freud's Uncanny. But the sexual identity of Péret's automatons and de Chirico's mannekins is neither always clear nor even necessary to interpretation. It may well be, for instance, that the latter were equally inspired by female dressmakers' dummies and by the image of a male musician without facial features, drawn from the writings of poet Guillaume Apollinaire. It has even been thought that Apollinaire's blind musician, and hence de Chirico's mannekins, were symbolic manifestations of the artist's penis.[137] As will be seen, this kind of phallus-projection may play a role in Surrealist images of what appear to be women. For the moment, however, it is most important to note that the Surrealists soon took the mannekin-automaton and made it specifically female. As such, it became the heiress to the muses of automatism discussed earlier in this chapter, for the loose analogy of mental automatism and automatic machines was irresistibly attractive, especially when seasoned thoroughly with the Uncanny.[138] Moreover, the Surrealists made an attempt to allow for the possibility of a female psychology, though this too was thoroughly coloured by the ideas of Freud.

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[135] Péret, p. 34.

[136] On ruins as marvellous, see the "Manifesto," p. 16. On ghosts, see Nadja, pp. 100, 112; Le Surréalisme et la peinture, pp. 40, 43; and innumerable others. See the discussion in Carrouges, Basic Concepts, pp. 33-8.

The fundamental principle, the common denominator in the psyches of all women, was that which the Surrealists found most attractive in women seen in the street: the provocative glance, with its attendant promise of sexual pleasure outside the restrictions of normal bourgeois society. The most famous example of this is undoubtedly the cover of Dalí's La Femme Visible, illustrated only with the penetrating gaze of Gala, who was the Surrealist muse _par excellence_.[139] However, the image can be found everywhere in Surrealist productions, often linked with the mannekin or automaton. For his part, Breton saw beyond the mere titillation of a wax-work figure fastening her garter in the shadows of the Musée Grévin; he noted that she had "eyes of provocation," acknowledging that such provocation, when pushed to the point of self-destruction, was the essence of love.[140] The poet thus challenged his followers to subvert all moral values. It seemed that Surrealism would finally be able to rid itself of Hoffmann's mortal Klara, so to speak, replacing her with an undamaged, immortal Olympia--that is, one with provocative eyes restored.

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[137] See especially Willard G. Bohn, "Apollinaire and de Chirico: the Making of the Mannekins," Comparative Literature, XXVII, no. 2 (Spring 1975), pp. 153-65.

[138] Carrouges, Basic Concepts, p. 232 notes: "It is not by chance that the poets discover mental automatism at the time when scientists are inventing masses of automatic machines." See also chapter I.

About twenty artists tried to make restored Nathaniels of themselves, as it were, by breathing life into a series of mannekins presented at the _Exposition Internationale du Surréalisme_ of 1938. Within the confines of the Galerie des Beaux-Arts, they created a veritable network of real and fictitious streets populated by provocative pseudo-females. Each stood beneath or near a commonplace street sign, but the names of those streets were far from common. If the street-name were not sheer fancy, like Duchamp's rue aux Lèvres (lips street) or rue de la Transfusion de Sang (blood transfusion street), then it alluded to literary precursors, like Masson's rue Vivienne.[141] Of course, these mannekins were not functioning automata, but they did move in the same twilight realm, as it were, evidently alluding to the sort of sexual street solicitation that may still be encountered in the magical and tawdry half-light of the rue Saint-Martin. Moreover, the hall was originally supposed to be dark, though the supply of flashlights viewers had to rent in order to inspect the mannekins was quickly exhausted.[142] Three of the strange creations were covered from head to foot. Jean Arp's was completely covered with a shroud of sorts; Wolfgang Paalen's wore moss, mushrooms and a bat's-wing headdress; and Max Ernst's was a widow shrouded in black, trampling a man underfoot.[143]

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[139] Salvador Dalí, _La Femme Visible_ (Paris: Editions Surréalistes, 1930). The photograph is reproduced in Chadwick, _Women Artists_, p. 38, fig. 22. A brief description of Gala's role is also given, pp. 36-8.

[140] Breton, _Nadja_, pp. 152-3. Nadja's role in this was paramount, but the author realized that he did not truly love her. The proof was his failure to commit suicide while blindly kissing her in a speeding automobile.

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[141] This is a street running from the first to the second arrondissement, between the Bibliothèque Nationale and the Bourse des Valeurs. Lautréamont was said to have lived there and it is featured in his Chants de Maldoror. See note 249.

[142] The idea was Man Ray's. See Pierre Cabanne, Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp, trans. R. Padgett (New York: Viking, 1971), pp. 80-1. On the street names, see Clébert, pp. 59-61. Breton also gives a short description in his Entretiens, p. 182.

[143] See the illustrated discussions in Jean and Mezei, pp. 281-9; and more recently in Daniel Abadie, "L'Exposition internationale du surréalisme, Paris, 1938," in Paris-Paris: créations en France 1937-1957 (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, 28 May-2 November, 1981), pp. 72-81.

All the others were at least partly nude. Dalí's wore only a mask, a pair of gloves, and dozens of spoons (see note 101). Oscar Dominguez did not clothe his at all, choosing only to wrap one arm in twine while a nearby syphon sprayed a jet of fabric past her waist. Marcel Duchamp's wore a man's hat and jacket, with a red light bulb in the breast pocket; it was nude from the waist down.[144] Marcel Jean's was a water-nymph caught in a net, while Joan Miró's was similarly snared in what might be described as a wire drawing--automatic of course--in space. Man Ray's wept crystal tears while clay pipes blew bubbles in her hair, and Yves Tanguy's contribution was entirely nude but for two spindles looking much like Alberto Giacometti's malevolently phallic Disagreeable Object of 1931.[145]

Properly speaking, none of these figures was an operational automaton, but they all had a similarly marvellous function--to incite the hidden desires of the male viewer. Breton exercised strict control in one regard: if the provocation of a particular mannekin were too overt, he demanded changes. Such was the case with Léo Malet's figure, in which the suggestive movements of a fish in a globe on its lower abdomen were criticized as too obvious.[146] The eroticism of these mannekins had to be veiled in keeping with Breton's principle of *érotique-voilée*, primarily because one's response to the marvellous beauty of the Uncanny, as manifested in the realm of sexual desire, must be an unthinking, authentic emotional response.[147] Such an eroticism was supposed to be unlearned and to some extent involuntary, a position which is more remarkable, considering the flagrant sexual message of Breton's favourite mannekin, André Masson's *Le Bâillon vert à bouche de pensée* (fig. 31).[148] Here, a young woman was represented explicitly in those terms which had accompanied Freud's description of the automaton Olympia. Nathaniel's downfall had been the discovery of the truth about Olympia, which was accompanied by his discovery of her discarded eyes. Freud had described the loss or damage of the eye as a symbol of castration, an association which the Surrealists were happy to capitalize on in their interpretations of things as varied as the fate of Oedipus Rex, the crime of the Papin sisters, and innumerable poetic and pictorial incidents.[149] They certainly realized, then, that Uncanny automata were also insatiable sexual devourers, for Freud maintained that much of the disquieting strangeness generated by Olympia was in fact castration anxiety.[150] Masson's mannekin multiplied the signs of a castration threat to the point of redundancy: her red g-string imitated a bloody gash, her sex was an oval mirror surrounded by tiger-eyes, birds nested in her armpits, and fish swam through her hair. Most overt were the phallic red peppers strewn on the base, each caught in a small trap. Masson has even cheerfully acknowledged that the peppers' unexpected loss of rigidity after the first day contributed to the meaning of the work.[151] All these Uncanny automata seem to be saying that women are very dangerous indeed.[152]

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[144] Duchamp's mannekin has been interpreted as a hermaphrodite, with supposedly positive spiritual or psychological ramifications. See Schwarz, cat. no. 303, p. 505. Without the occult support, however, it can be seen as exemplifying the patriarchal dichotomy mentioned in note 60. Male = culture, clothing, upper half (brain); female = nature, nudity, lower half (reproductive organs).

[145] This had been reproduced as a drawing in Giacometti's "Objets mobils et muets," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 3 (December, 1931), p. 19.

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[146] Jean and Mezei, p. 281.

[147] Originally formulated in "La beauté sera convulsive," and restated with reference to primitivism in art in "Main première," an exhibition preface reprinted in *La Brèche/Action surréaliste*, no. 4 (February, 1964), p. 32.

[148] Breton, "Prestige d'André Masson (1939)," in *Le Surréalisme et la peinture*, p. 154, describes the mannekin as the perfect example of "a plastic metaphor in the pure state, which is to say untranslatable into words." It is because the figure's meaning is so transparent that Breton's assertion seems paradoxical.

It is not important to presume that Freud's theory of castration anxiety has any objective truth. Much more significant is the Surrealist faith--if that is the best word for an anti-clerical movement--in such a description of women. This faith was supported by the image of women the Surrealists had inherited from the nineteenth century, as well as by the inherently poetic potential of the stereotype, often manifesting itself in unprecedented images like Masson's mannekin. All women are sexual devourers, vampires, vamps,[153] necessitating some form of occult protection. As Surrealism was officially anti-clerical, the makers of the mannekins had to protect themselves with a psychological occult, not with its reviled spiritual antecedents. Once again, the means was supplied by Freud, who had explained Nathaniel's desire to throw the living Klara from the top of a tower in terms of castration anxiety. A woman's lack of a phallus generates fear in males, and some compensation can be had by simply lashing out. Nathaniel's act had little direct influence on the Surrealist, although Dalí has told a disturbingly similar tale of his desire to throw women off towers, which fortunately was always assuaged by some obscure symbolism.[154] In general, the other Surrealists were content with subtler and, perhaps, more subversive methods.

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[149] See the discussion in Chapter I, p. 49.

[150] Freud, "The Uncanny," S.E., XVII, pp. 234-5.

[151] In conversation with Clébert, p. 61.

[152] There is an alternative or overlapping interpretation of Masson's mannekin in chapter II. Although there is an "elevating" allusion to the goddess Kali, there remain connotations of sex and death, as if the two stride forever hand in hand.

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[153] The word vamp seems originally to have been used to describe the unscrupulous seductresses that often appeared in the silent movies that the Surrealists held so dear. One such was Musidora, who appeared in a film serial (like the beloved Fantômas, see notes 202, 203) entitled Les Vampires. On this female, see Patrick Casals, Musidora, la dixième muse (n.l.: Veyrier, 1978). On the filmic interests of Breton, Aragon, Soupault and others, see Steven Kovács, From Enchantment to Rage: the Story of Surrealist Cinema (Rutherford, New Jersey: Fairleigh-Dickinson, 1980), pp. 33-7. The latter is one of the better studies in English of a subject that has been superficially treated far too often. Occasionally, movie stills found their way into La Révolution Surréaliste. See, for example, no. 3 (15 April, 1925), p. 12; and no. 1 (1 December, 1924), p. 22.

The faithful save themselves in the presence of a vampire by brandishing a cross or crucifix. The Surrealist saves himself in the presence of a vamp by wielding the only equivalent thing that he possesses, his phallus. Freud had succinctly stated that the fetishist allays the fear generated by the absence of a phallus in the subsequent projection of a phallus, which is to say that Woman is psychologically provided with one.[155] This process can be quite blatant, often creating an understandable confusion of subjected women with the mythical androgyne (fig. 56). It can also be quite subtle and aesthetically intriguing, though the artistically clever inscription or encoding of a female body is no less psychologically subversive. If the projection or inscription of the phallus is effective, it reduces male fears by allowing the fetishist to revere the fetish unconsciously as the sign of his own sexuality. As usual, Dalí is the only Surrealist to be explicit on this latter point, describing masturbation as a gesture of adoration and an exaltation of the self, for example.[156] Nevertheless, his peers felt essentially the same way, as can be unmistakably seen in two photographs by Man Ray and a painting by Magritte. In Anatomies of c. 1930 (fig. 57), the American photographer has rendered a female body unfamiliar by tilting the model's head backwards until her pale skin on the dark background assumes the form of a phallus. This alone creates the Baudelairean-Bretonian shock or convulsion, the disorienting effects of which are aspects of the Freudian Uncanny.[157] Less subtle is Man Ray's Erotique-voilée of 1933 (fig. 58), which phallicizes, as it were, the artist Meret Oppenheim with the strategically placed handle of a printing press. This is simply the clever provision of a phallus where one is missing. Breton must have thought it too elementary and obvious a solution, for the lower portion was partly cropped out when he used it to illustrate his point about veiled eroticism.[158] His insistence on the veil, on the sublimal nature of the message, restates Freud's assertion that the fetishist's adoration of his own penis must be largely unconscious. In its directness, the photograph is not too different from Magritte's L'Amour (fig. 56), though it is a more witty image. Much more effective from the psychological point of view--and yet more subversive, we might add--is the forced synthesis of a female body and the very idea of phallus, so that a woman ceases to be Woman at all and becomes merely another penis. This is the implication of Man Ray's Anatomies, but it is nowhere clearer than in Magritte's L'Océan (fig. 59), in which a woman is subjugated until she becomes the penis of a reclining river god. It is no less telling that this woman had also appeared in a painting inscribed "Je ne vois pas la femme cachée dans la forêt" (fig. 12). Surrounded there by Surrealists with closed eyes, she signifies precisely that her adorers were indeed blind to any but their own subjective inner realities. However, it should be noted that these realities were not merely--or even principally--psychological, for they were predicated upon intellectual fashions which assumed (in spite of their cultural relativity) a sort of "natural" truth. Part of the staying power of such prejudices is in the willful ignorance with which they are regarded by their practitioners. Just as Nathaniel would have preferred never to have learned the truth about Olympia, the fetishist resists the removal of the symbol for the reality, and the Surrealist rejects most interpretation.[159]

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[154] This was the fate he had in mind for his sexual slave Dullita, before Gala had come along. See his *Unspeakable Confessions*, p. 67. Another account is given in *La vie secrète*, pp. 105-124, in which a *diabolo*, a toy top, is thrown over in Dullita's place and comes to signify the sacrifice of Isaac. In addition, the crutch becomes a symbol of death and resurrection (p. 124), which is all the more curious since it had been used in a sex game (p. 113). Much of this seems to be invention after the fact. See the artist's sister's accounts, Ana Mariá Dalí, *Salvador Dalí vu par sa soeur*, trans. J. Martin (Paris: Arthaud, 1961), pp. 20-1, 22, 27. He even wanted to toss his beloved Gala from the rocks, but that was *before* he had made love to her: *The Unspeakable Confessions*, p. 92.

[155] Freud, "The Uncanny," *S.E.*, XVII, passim, and enlarged upon in "The Medusa's Head," *S.E.*, XVIII, p. 273.

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[156] Among other examples, see The Unspeakable Confessions, pp. 68 and 95; and Lake, pp. 69-71.

[157] See Jane Livingston, "Man Ray and Surrealist Photography," in L'amour fou: Photograph and Surrealism, pp. 128 and 147. The necessity of defamiliarizing the human body is described in the same book as a function of Georges Bataille's doctrine of the informe or formlessness (Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delecti," pp. 55-100). The essay overlooks the significance of Bataille's original use of the word (noted on p. 64 in passing), which involves the replacement of word-meanings with word-tasks. The task in the case of Anatomies is in keeping with convulsive beauty and does not remain formless. The original source is Bataille's "Informe," Visions, p. 31.

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[158] Breton, "La beauté sera convulsive," p. 15. Chadwick, Women Artists, fig. 36 mistakenly identifies it as Erotique-violée (that is, "erotic-raped" instead of the correct "erotic-veiled"). Chadwick's caption also seems to perpetuate an old misunderstanding that the photograph is Oppenheim's work. The artist has categorically refuted this notion, saying that Man Ray chose the pose and that she cannot see "ce que mon oeuvre a à voir avec ce corps de jeune fille." See Suzanne Pagé and Béatrice Parent, "Interview de Meret Oppenheim," in Meret Oppenheim (Paris: A R C Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, 27 October-10 December, 1984), p. 17.

The German artist Hans Bellmer proves to be a virtual synthesis of almost all of the foregoing. Like the Baudelairean child-convalescent, his impassioned curiosity allowed him to take apart, so to speak, the bodies of young girls, whose only mistake it was to be at the tender age of a presumed sexual awakening. The macabre thrill provided by his self-flaying females (fig. 60) is thus the result of both his amoral inquisitiveness and his Nietzschean will to power, a facet of his personality that began to manifest itself in his youth. As a child, Bellmer had thought he had a magical sovereignty over the world until he became aware of the sexual difference of young girls.[160] Much of his subsequent work constituted both a return to childhood and an attempt to triumph over the autonomy of the adolescent female.[161] His principle weapon was the revelation of the truth of what might be called female non-entity:

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[159] René Magritte was most vehement on this point. At least eighteen of the 219 texts in his Ecrits complets, include a remark to this effect. Even André Breton, whose opinion of Freud was very high for the better part, was careful to distinguish the Surrealist position from that of the interpretive clinicians. See "Interview with Indice (May, 1935)" and "Interview with René Bélance (12-13 December, 1945)," in What is Surrealism? Selected Writings, ed. F. Rosemont (New York: Monad, 1978), pp. 147 and 257 respectively.

> I want to reveal scandalously the interior that will always remain hidden and sensed behind the successive layers of the human structure and its last unknowns.[162]

What he discovered there is that the female body

> is comparable to a sentence which would invite you to disarticulate it [sic], to rearrange it so that its *real meaning*

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[160] Constantin Jelenski, *Les Dessins de Hans Bellmer* (Paris: Denoël, 1966), p. 18.

[161] Bellmer acknowledged that his famous *Doll* (fig. 25) was both a return to childhood and an erotic liberation. See the interview in Peter Webb, ed., *The Erotic Arts* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1975), appendix II, p. 369f. He also described the *Doll* as "the definitive triumph over the wide-eyed adolescents," in *Die Puppe* (Karlsruhe: privately printed, 1934). This is reprinted in its entirety in *Obliques, numéro spécial: Hans Bellmer*, pp. 58-65. The quotation is from p. 65. One critic has fancifully described Bellmer's return to childhood as overshooting the mark, entering a prenatal stage of metamorphosis. See Yves Taillandier, "Bellmer, ou l'éloge des prisons prénatales," *XX^{e} siecle*, no. 38 (June, 1972), pp. 38-47.

[162] Bellmer, *L'Anatomie de l'image* (Paris: Terrain Vague, 1954). Reprinted in *Obliques, numéro spécial: Hans Bellmer*, pp. 130-1.

> becomes clear through an endless series of anagrams.[163]

The meaning of this female "sentence" is a collapse or contradiction of femininity, for what is revealed is yet another phallus (fig. 61). Bellmer achieved his triumph by willfully ignoring the true separateness of the female sex, proposing in its place the same kind of false androgyny as that imposed by the phallic projections of Man Ray, Magritte, Hoffman's Nathaniel (as seen by Freud) and the man who desired Villiers' future Eve, Hadaly. Moreover, he had no qualms about the practice:

> It is certain that no-one has, until now, asked themselves seriously enough in what measure the image of the desired woman would be predetermined by that of the man who desires, in the final analysis, by a series of projections of the phallus.164

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[163] Ibid., p. 112. The italics are mine. The interview referred to in note 161 rephrases this original text in such a way as to make it clear that the artist did not consider this endeavour to be anything other than the revelation of new realities (Webb, p. 370).

[164] Bellmer, "L'Anatomie de l'image," in Obliques, numéro spécial: Hans Bellmer, p. 127. It should be noted that the artist believed that such projection participated in the mythic significance of the androgyne (p. 130):

> The masculine and the feminine have become interchangeable images; the one, like the other, is aimed at an alloy in the hermaphrodite.

This was a commonplace of Surrealist thought. See, most tellingly, René Crevel's "La grande mannequin cherche et trouve sa peau," Minotaure, no. 5 (February, 1934), p. 19.

A woman's body can be manipulated so that contemplation of her breasts becomes the fetishist's adulation of his own testicles, and her vagina is his own urethra (fig. 62). The male has allayed his fear of castration without losing the Surreal pleasure of the convulsive or Uncanny *frisson*. The result is that the female has no existence outside that of the male; she has neither the ability nor the right to self-identification.

Nowhere is the misappropriation of the female body clearer than in Bellmer's celebrated *Doll* (figs. 63-4), the personal and psychological origins of which are well established. Most frequently described is the German artist's sexual attraction towards minors, manifested most memorably as an infatuation with his adolescent cousin Ursula.[165] Also of note is a box of childhood playthings which his mother sent to him when he was already retreating into fantasy to escape the rising German right. Perhaps of more obvious significance were his encounter in a Berlin museum of some ball-jointed dolls attributed to the school of Dürer and his relations with Lotte Pritzell, a professional dollmaker who happened to be married to the doctor of Bellmer's dying wife.[166] The most interesting of these stimuli was Bellmer's experience of Jacques Offenbach's operatic production of The Tales of Hoffmann. As staged by Max Reinhardt in 1933, the first act was based on "the Sandman."[167] Bellmer's goal, like that of the Surrealists who would soon come to his aid,[168] was to succeed where Nathaniel had failed--to preserve the element of the Uncanny by willfully ignoring true sexual difference. His Doll is an entirely manipulable pseudo-female minor, whose bodily tissue is metaphorically erectile. Like the phallus she truly is, the Doll is capable of swelling, seems to have a life of her own, and can be doubled, tripled or multiplied in any way to mitigate the horror of castration anxiety.[169] This extreme fetishization of the female body--nowhere so apparent as in the Doll photographs including shoes or carpetbeaters--can be simply too obvious: the resolution of castration anxiety breaks down and we are left with an ineffective jumble of anagrammatic elements.[170] What is most intriguing about this is not the ostensible truth or falsehood of a Freudian reading--its psychological facticity, as it were. It is that the cultural presuppositions that lead to the presumption of truth allow an observable sadism in such a treatment of a supposedly female image. For example, it is not truly relevant that Olympia's destroyed eyes may signify castration; much more important is the irrefutable fact that such interpretations constituted acceptable poetic imagery to the Surrealists and provided the foundation for the fabrication of further such imagery.[171] One must also note the disturbing fact that images of this sort were not merely to be consumed and forgotten; they were to be used as instruments to establish a poetic way of life.[172] Predicated upon the misunderstanding and misuse of women, such an imagery openly advocates a subsequent iconography of misogyny.

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[165] Bellmer described this attraction as "wholly innocent," though he did link it to sexual daydreams inspired by his wife's long illness. See the interview in Webb, p. 366.

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[166] Lotte Pritzell was once commissioned to make a life-sized doll for Oskar Kokoschka, whose intended relationship with the object had an air of rather sordid misanthropy. That Kokoschka's patron was interested in pornography and claimed to have chairs upholstered in women's skins adds to the fetishistic flavour of the anecdote. See Kokoschka's My Life, trans. D. Britt (London: Thames and Hudson, 1974), pp. 115-18.

[167] Portions of these influences are described in various texts: most useful are Jelenski, pp. 5-6; and Patrick Waldberg, "Hans Bellmer, ou l'écorcheur écorché," in Hans Bellmer (Paris: Galerie Daniel Cordier, December, 1963). The latter is reprinted in Waldberg's Les Demeures d'Hypnos (Paris: Editions de la Différence, 1976), pp. 343-55.

[168] Bellmer's first dolls were photographed in 1934, before his first appearance among the Surrealists with "Poupée: variations sur le montage d'une mineure articulée," Minotaure, no. 6 (Winter, 1934-5), pp. 30-1. The artist was glad of the link with the French but was much less interested in automatism. His work was thought out in advance and highly controlled. See the interview in Webb, passim.

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[169] Freud's "The Medusa's Head," S.E., XVIII, p. 273: "This is a confirmation of the technical rule according to which a multiplication of penis symbols signifies castration." In other words, the duplication of phallic elements both confirms and alleviates anxiety. This collision of elements produces the beautiful *frisson*.

[170] There are those who accept wholeheartedly the analogy of body and word, to the point of denying the erotic constants. See, for example, Daniel Abadie, "Hans Bellmer, ou la poupée retournée," *Nouvelles de l'estampe*, no. 22 (July-August, 1975), pp. 30-1. There are others who see the eroticism as occult (*mysterium conjunctionis*) and/or Baudelairean *correspondances*: Jean Brun, "Analogie et anatomie. Le verbe et la chair dans le symbolisme et le surréalisme," in Enrico Castelli, ed., *Surrealismo e simbolismo. Archivio di Filosofia, III* (Padua: CEDAM, 1965), pp. 43-52. Still others see it as a witty but sexless comment on the construction of women's identities through representation: Theresa Lichtenstein, "Hans Bellmer and the Representation of Women," *Arts Magazine*, LIX, no. 10 (June, 1985), pp. 102-3.

e) Sade and the Sadeian personality

It certainly is true that iconographical sadism is not the same as real acts of cruelty and, in fact, the Surrealists were rarely physically sadistic. Dalí has told some stories of brutal sex with Gala and of whipping a young woman who described sadism as mere literary snobism,[173] but that hardly compares with the dismemberments he seemed to advocate when he wrote:

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[171] Foster, p. 122, attributes iconographical sadism to a break down of the resolution of castration anxiety, itself caused by too obvious fetishism. Rosalind Krauss, "Corpus Delecti," p. 95 rather absurdly argues that the sadism is itself not sexual but a kind of linguistic deconstruction of cultural identities and therefore proto-feminist. It is more likely a middle point between the two, where male artists root around in their subconscious minds without realizing that what they find is, at least in part, as culturally predetermined as their conscious minds.

[172] See the famous passage in Breton's _Le Surréalisme et la peinture_, p. 14, in which he condemns the story of a convalescent man who destroyed a beautiful female hallucination by drinking some healing broth: "How can I help feeling deceived in this man who failed to _live out the most beautiful poem in the world?_" The italics are added.

[173] Dalí, _The Unspeakable Confessions_, pp. 92-5 (Gala); Dalí and Louis Pauwells, _Les Passions selon Dalí_ (Paris: Denoël, 1968), pp. 158-9.

> Woman will become spectral in the disarticulation and the deformation of her anatomy. The "collapsible body" [corps démontable] is the aspiration and the algid verification of feminine exhibitionism.[174]

Directly beside this text was a reproduction of a painting by Alberto Martini, La Beauté feminine, which showed a flayed female skin with a normal, conscious head, but the relations of cause and effect between such an image and a real sex crime are as difficult to determine as those in the seemingly never-ending debate on pornography.[175] More revealing is the attribution of blame to the victim: Dalí's dismantling of women is a function of female exhibitionism, just as Bellmer's interventions were supposed to discover the real meaning of the female body. The young girls who flay themselves in the latter's drawings (figs. 60-1) do not merely play a linguistic game, however, nor do they simply perform a metaphorical strip-tease for the enrichment of male masturbation or female self-improvement.[176] They actually practice a violation of themselves, which Bellmer made clear in the anagrammatic permutations of the title of one of them, Rose au coeur violet. The phrase itself puns on coeur violet/violé, purple *or* raped heart, and the artist's variations included "Soeur à voile courte--écolier vous a outré / Curé, ou Eros t'a voilé," and so on.[177] The artist's only role is supposed to be as the catalyst of the revelation of the victim's *own* desires.

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[174] Dalí, "Les nouvelles couleurs du sex appeal spectrale," Minotaure, no. 5 (February, 1934), p. 22.

[175] The bibliography on this is enormous. A fairly recent summary is Edward C. Nelson, "Pornography and Sexual Aggression," in Maurice Yaffé and E. C. Nelson, eds., The Influence of Pornography on Behaviour (London: Academic Press, 1982), pp. 171-248. Very simply, no conclusions can be drawn without emotional partisanship.

The situation is similar in Dalí's Young Virgin Autosodomized by the Horns of Her Own Chastity of 1954 (fig. 65). Not only is she collapsible and thus appealingly spectral, her removable body parts have become the very phalluses which deflower her.[178] The act of defloration itself is worthy of admiration in the minds of Surrealists. It implies that all women are vegetal, another facet of their supposedly natural identity, and that women need to be freed from their immobility by the intervention of men. Dalí and others have created flower-headed women, while the poets have written endlessly of the sexual enticement of the vegetal female:

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[176] Bellmer replied to a questionnaire on the strip-tease, which he had never seen, to the effect that men might have improved masturbation while single women would be "encouraged to perfect themselves." The original was in Le Surréalisme, même, no 4 (Spring, 1958), and is reprinted in Obliques, numéro spécial: Hans Bellmer, p. 155.

[177] Bellmer, "L'Anatomie de l'image, in ibid., p. 113.

[178] Dalí acknowledged that the rhinoceros horns in the picture were phallic symbols, but he preferred to invoke a Freudian reversibility formula to show that they were symbols of chastity. See Cowles, p. 303.

> ...tes seins
> Tous les parfums d'un bouquet
> De la violette au jasmin.[179]

It is clear that the act of defloration inspires in the female awe of the male because of the supposedly emancipatory character of the act. Poet Jacques Prévert had his poetic femme-fleur write: "J'attends le vainqueur," while painter André Masson entitled one of his works The Great Deflowerer Celebrated by His Victims.[180] Dalí even went so far as to demand that a sodomized woman should admit she adored "the thing that's up your arse!"[181] Such female victims supposedly desire violation and bring it upon themselves. In many cases this takes the specific form of sodomy--not as a sexual liberation or antibourgeois erotogenic awakening, but as a form of punishment. The origins of this significance pre-date Freud, and they seem to be in the practice of male rape.[182] The Surrealists, however, were largely against homosexuality--punishment or not[183]--and turned sexual anality into an almost exclusively heterosexual activity. The acceptance of this was almost universal,[184] leading one to the ambiguous conclusion that their much vaunted liberation of the sexuality of men entailed, perhaps unconsciously, the punishment of women. Such, certainly, is the tone of a text by Robert Desnos, in which he describes the sodomization of a woman "reduced to powerlessness," whose "tempest of cries and sobs" indicates the "new emotion [which] torments the patient."[185] Even the normally chivalrous Breton, when asked if he had indulged in sodomy, answered: "Perfectly." There is a triumphant tone in his single-word response which agrees with the essentially sadistic character of the act: sodomy requires a greater degree of force, of exertion of the will, so to speak.[186]

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[179] Paul Eluard, "Les sens," in Le livre ouvert (Paris: Gallimard, 1967), p. 180.

[180] The watercolour of 1922-3 is discussed by Masson as the earliest appearance of the sexually aggressive Minotaur, in Clébert, p. 38. For a number of poetic and pictorial examples of the femme-fleur, see Gauthier, pp. 98-109.

[181] Dalí, The Unspeakable Confessions, p. 221.

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[182] Thorkil Vanggaard, Phallós: A Symbol and Its History in the Male World (London: Jonathan Cape, 1972), p. 102.

[183] René Crevel was the only recognized homosexual of the group, but there are suggestions that "an attitude of prohibition...strongly risked concealment of an equally great interest." See Gauthier, p. 232. Gauthier discusses in some detail the question of latent homosexuality (pp. 230-40). Breton actually attacked Ilya Ehrenburg for calling the Surrealists "a bunch of pederasts." See Franklin Rosemont's introduction to his edition of Breton's writings, What is Surrealism? Selected Writings, p. 77.

[184] Of the fifteen participants in the "Recherches sur la sexualité," pp. 32-40, none rejected the practice.

[185] Desnos, La Liberté ou l'amour (Paris: Gallimard, 1962), pp. 70-1. The translation here is literal, for the description of the treatment of la patiente suggests a medical abuse. It should be noted, however, that patiente also means a long-suffering individual and even a condemned person.

Visual images of anal intercourse are commonplace in present-day pornography, but they are fairly rare in Surrealist art. Dalí's fascination with the anus is well known, and there are numerous pictures with fingers pointing and poking at the orifice.[187] Nevertheless, only the Young Virgin Autosodomized capitalizes on both this anality and the fetishized female body. More explicit are some images by Hans Bellmer, one of which seems also to illustrate the perversion known as coprophilia, an excessive interest in feces.[188]

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[186] For Breton's response, see the "Recherches sur la sexualité," p. 34. Gauthier, p. 229 notes the triumphant tone but draws no conclusions from it. On the sadistic character of the act, see Clifford Allen, "Perversions, sexual," in Ellis and Abarbanel, pp. 804 and 805-6. The actual incidence of heterosexual anality appears to be overwhelmingly less frequent than the pornographic imagination and its cultural byproducts would have us believe.

[187] The most notable example is Le jeu lugubre (1929), but the motif can also be found in the Portrait de Paul Eluard (1929), the Monument impérial à la femme-enfant (1929), and a drawing of 1933 entitled Des douceurs fines pour les enfants. All of these are reproduced in Salvador Dalí, rétrospective 1920-80, figs. 75, 78, 79 and 101 respectively. These are but a few of many.

It is not our intention to duplicate the work of Xavière Gauthier in assembling and elaborating an iconography of perversions. The point to be taken is that the fetishized female body has been transformed into a phallus, clearly understood as the weapon or the instrument of its own aggression. Moreover, Dalí and Bellmer were not the only artists to have placed the blame for such conspicuous degradation on the shoulders of the victim. Even the creative personality of René Magritte, often interpreted as subtly humorous,[189] was capable of producing the Gigantic Days (fig. 66). A nude woman struggles with a male attacker who exists only within the contours of her own body. It is less clear that the image is a case of phallic projection because the woman's body is less overtly fetishized than those of Dalí and Bellmer. Nevertheless, the picture is equally dependent upon the cultural presumption of female masochism. Freud had described sadism and masochism as expressions of the male and female characters respectively as early as 1924, and one of the translators and followers of Freud, Marie Bonaparte, had formulated express connections between femininity and masochism by 1933.[190] The Surrealists knew some of the works of Bonaparte, but there is no specific evidence that they had knowledge of her version of this theory. The problem is academic, however, for the conception of the masochistic female was endemic to French intellectuals from the time of the Revolution until well after the publication of Simone de Beauvoir's Le deuxième sexe (1949). One good example known to the Surrealists was Jules Michelet's L'Amour of 1848, in which women are described as "the eternally wounded."[191]

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[188] This interest can be exaggerated to the point of ingestion, or coprophagia, which is seen in a Bellmer drawing and in a drawing by Dalí entitled Project pour le menu du Marquis de Sade (1931). The latter is reproduced in ibid., fig. 95. The Bellmer example is reproduced and discussed in Gauthier, pp. 214-5. She is quite mistaken, however, in asserting that the woman's vagina is penetrated. Also important in this regard are two descriptions of fecal ingestion in Dalí's La Femme Visible, pp. 52-5 and 67.

[189] Magritte accepted the characterization only insofar as the humour was subversive. See the "(Interview du 22 août 1962)," and "Le Savoir vivre," reprinted in his Ecrits complets, pp. 571 and 229 respectively.

The real meaning of the fetishized female body, to paraphrase Bellmer, is that it has no identity independent of male phallic self-adoration. Symptomatically, the ancient religious significance of phallus worship--chiefly a matter of fructifying power[192]--has become transformed into destructive, negative imagery. Guns and other weapons are examples of Freudian phallic symbols which have been thoroughly absorbed by contemporary culture and language, just as the basically Freudian assumption of male phallic control has been accepted.[193] The phallicized female body, therefore, is all the more subversive as an indication of a presumed female need for male domination. Moreover, any damage which results from her manipulation--physical, psychological or societal (they begin to act as metaphors for one another)--is strictly her fault because of her masochistic need. The cultural prejudice is all the more disquieting when one notes how similar it is to the feeble excuses repeatedly encountered in the literature on rape and other sex crimes. One reads endless descriptions of one victim or another deserving her fate because of her impure behaviour, her provocative clothing, or even because the deed occurred in a context of culturally-assumed male guiltlessness, as in wartime rapes.[194]

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[190] Freud, Three Essays on Sexuality (1905), S.E., VII, p. 160 (added 1924). For Bonaparte, see chapter I, note 116.

[191] Michelet, L'Amour (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1848); see the lengthy discussion in Anne R. Pugh, Michelet and his Ideas on Social Reform (New York: Columbia University Press, 1923), pp. 107-220.

[192] A convenient summary of this aspect can be found under the heading "Phallus Worship," in Walker, pp. 793-7.

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[193] Freud's Introductory Lectures on Psychoanalysis (1916-17), S.E. XV, p. 154, lists knives, pistols, revolvers, rifles and sabres as unquestioned phallic symbols. All of these are now so thoroughly assimilated that they have become obvious clichés, often exploited for humorous effect. This serves only to obscure the corrupt origins of the allusion to destructive forces. Walker, "Phallus Worship," p. 797 gives other interesting examples, but she does not include the vulgarity "fuck off," which is a prime example of the transformation of a biological function into a cultural term of degradation and dismissal. The implication is very much that a weapon has been swung in warning. On the question of male phallic control, see Fromm, pp. 7-10.

[194] Susan Brownmiller, Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975), pp. 22-3; A. Nicholas Groth, Men Who Rape: the Psychology of the Offender (New York: Plenum, 1979), pp. 7-8 and many others.

The Surrealists, it is well known, were very interested in the world of crime, largely because moral ambiguities were sometimes involved, reflecting their own rejection of bourgeois social values. Freud had noted that the breakthrough of the unconscious, if left unchecked by the ego and superego, would necessitate a social revolution because bourgeois values would be obsolete. He advocated a compromise: some repression is a small price to pay for civilization.[195] At this point, the Austrian psychologist parted company with the Surrealists, who had long been in favour of the revolution attendant upon complete freedom from repression. The urges that are released are decidedly anti-social and take on a criminal air if viewed from a reactionary standpoint.[196] It is no surprise, then, that the Surrealists would be interested in crime stories and their like, as has already been seen in the cases of Germaine Berthon and the Papin sisters. There is a certain ambivalence in this, however, for the female criminal is very rare in the Surrealists' sources. When she does appear it is usually in a form so extreme as to be nearly a caricature of human personality. More often than not, females are the victims of crimes, sometimes willing and almost always deserving their fate.

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[195] Freud, Civilization and Its Discontents (1930), S.E. XXI, passim, and especially pp. 123-4.

[196] The Surrealists did not, however, consider them criminal, both because of the Nietzschean superior morality discussed above and because they believed the end justified the means. They had quoted a Russian worker defining the word morals: "le principe: 'La fin justifie les moyens' est absolument valable." See J.J. Dietzgen, letter of 1867 to Marx, s.v. "Définition," Les Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 2 (October, 1930), p. 9.

Such is the case with a young woman on the subway, whom Dalí described as plunged into "an enormous and delicious confusion, but without the least protestation" when she was subjected to the excesses of an exhibitionist. Far from rejecting the act, the Spanish artist lionized the exhibitionist, describing his deed as one of the "most pure and unselfish (désintéressés) that a man is capable of realizing in our era of debasement and moral degradation."[197] One soon realizes that this criminal endeavour involves a phallic control similar to that described above even when the crime is not sexual self-display while erect. Incidentally, Freud had described exhibitionism as a misplaced desire for sexual reciprocation --that is, poorly wielded control.[198] Another kind of control is more overt: whereas Dalí's exhibitionist was lucky in choosing a woman who protested little, others have to ensure the least amount of protestation by binding and gagging their subjects. The origins of images like Jacques-André Boiffard's sado-masochistically fetishized women (fig. 67) are partly psychological (defamiliarization as a function of phallic projection) and partly cultural (the assumption of female masochism). But in reality, the psychological component is also culturally determined, and the Surrealist found one determinant in detective fiction. The same magazine that ran Dalí's celebration of the exhibitionist reproduced a photograph of a man reading Détective magazine (fig. 68). The front cover features a gagged female face with provocatively imploring eyes; the rear cover is printed with the words "Nothing but the truth."[199] Equally compelling is the connection to bound women who make no pretense to the truth. For example, René Magritte's shrouded heads have been traced to the stories of pulp magazine hero Nick Carter.[200] In at least one case, the victim could not have protested anyway, for she was quite dead. This provided a parallel, a confirmation or an alternate source for the veiled heads usually interpreted as a reminiscence of Magritte's dead mother (see chapter I).

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[197] Dalí, "Arrestation d'un exhibitionniste," p. 9. The notice appeared immediately above the definition of morality mentioned in note 196.

[198] Freud, Three Essays on Sexuality, S.E., VII, p. 159 and elsewhere. See also note 193.

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[199] The photograph was run as a wry comment on the career change of the former editor of Détective, a man named Parain. He had just been made literary editor of L'Humanité, a leftist newspaper that Breton had described as "utterly unworthy of the role of proletarian education it claims to assume." See his "Légitime défense," printed as a pamphlet in 1926, reprinted in Point du jour, and translated by F. Rosemont in What is Surrealism?, Selected Writings, pp. 32-6. For broader notes on L'Humanité in particular, see Elyette Giuol-Benassaya, La Presse face au surréalisme de 1925 à 1938 (Paris: Centre national de la recherche scientifique, 1982), pp. 189-90.

[200] See David Sylvester, "Portraits de Magritte," trans. A. Pérez, in Rétrospective Magritte (Brussels: Palais des Beaux-Arts, 27 October-31 December, 1978), pp. 50-1, fig. 6. See also André Blavier's notes to Magritte's text "Nick Carter," in the Ecrits complets, pp. 40-1.

André Masson has testified that the crime stories of the legendary, morally ambiguous anti-hero Fantômas were ranked as highly as Freud's Introductory Lectures and Lautréamont's Chants de Maldoror in the early days of the movement.[201] Oddly, however, the name Fantômas only appears once in La Révolution Surréaliste, and then only in a dream recitation. Nevertheless, the character appeared in both the pictures and the writings of Magritte.[202] Interestingly, in all of the thirty-two original episodes of Fantômas, only one brief incident involved the direct expression of eroticism. On the whole, women have a negligible place in such fiction, yet their sexual value determines their function in the story even if it is never explicitly erotic. More often than not, sexuality is a matter of verbal description rather than deed.[203] Nevertheless, the detective story contributes to the image of the persecuted woman in preparing one for the imagery of the sex crime. For example, Magritte's The Threatened Assassin of 1926-7 (fig. 69) establishes the atmosphere of crime, with the perpetrator perfectly relaxed in spite of his impending capture. No doubt he is so calm because, like Fantômas, he always escapes and even seems to pass through walls. This is precisely what fascinated Magritte most about Fantômas, as is clear from his writings: the only way to capture him is to enter his dreams.[204] One cannot help but notice that all the emphasis of the picture is placed on the interpretation of the male perpetrator's experience. The female victim, on the other hand, is denied as a locus of experience; though she has undergone some abuse--blood streams from her mouth and a cloth covers the odd disjunction between her neck and otherwise sexually available nude body--she is merely there as a pretext for the story of male criminality. This denial of female human experience has been cited as one of the basic elements of the rapist's personality.[205]

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[201] Masson, "Le peintre et ses fantasmes," in his Le Rebelle, p. 31.

[202] It has long been known that Magritte's The Savage (c. 1928) and The Backfire (1943) were based on the cover of an issue of Fantômas from 1912. See Gablik, figs. 40, 41, 43. See also Magritte's "Notes sur Fantômas," Ecrits complets, pp. 48-9. The pulp fiction character is mentioned in an untitled account of a dream by Marcel Noll, La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 7 (15 June, 1926), p. 7.

[203] The whole run has been reissued: Pierre Souvestre and Marcel Allain, Fantômas (Paris: Arthème Fayard, February 1911-September 1913). Excellent studies of the role of women include Alfu, L'Encyclopédie de Fantômas (Paris: Alfu, 1981), pp. 103, 130-1, 161; and Ulrich Schulz-Buschhaus, Formen und Ideologien des Kriminalromans (Frankfurt: Athenaion, 1975), pp. 78-85.

One must not conclude from this that Magritte was a failed rapist or any other such thing. It become increasingly difficult, however, to disabuse oneself of the notion that the Surrealists enjoyed the intensity of the frissons generated by the sex crime. Moreover, it is increasingly difficult to separate the presumed poetic possibilities of such imagery from the cultural prejudices of the society against which these young intellectuals were revolting. From Magritte's relatively inoffensive image, the Surrealists quickly moved to explicitly dehumanizing, sexually criminal imagery. Alberto Giacometti's Woman with Her Throat Cut of 1932 (fig. 70), writhes on the floor, not merely as a pretext for a new, baseless sculpture.[206] And Man Ray cut a little deeper, as it were, severing a female head altogether and placing it under a bell jar (fig. 71). He even blindfolded his victim, so to speak, with a cleverly placed shadow, entitling the whole Hommage à D.A.F. de Sade.[207] Like a plant in a terrarium, this victim's head is the flower which had been removed from its stem by a male blade. Conceptual parallels are thus established between virginity and defloration, nature and (agri?) culture, sex and crime. The vegetal woman awaits the blows of the phallus in order to become more than just natural. In other words, the victim must become completely identified with the perpetrator to have a cultural identity. Perhaps it is for this reason that the more extreme acts of impassioned curiosity could be described as amoral.

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[204] Magritte, "Notes sur Fantômas," Ecrits complets, p. 49.

[205] Timothy Beneke, Men Who Rape (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1982), pp. 23-5.

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[206] See Reinhold Hohl, "Form and Vision: the Work of Alberto Giacometti," in Alberto Giacometti: A Restrospective Exhibition (New York: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, 1974), p. 22.

[207] This was originally reproduced in the end-papers of the same number of Le Surréalisime au service de la révolution as the Détective magazine mentioned in the text, no. 2 (October, 1930). This number, incidentally, also contained the first references to Sade since the cessation of La Révolution Surréaliste: Maurice Heine, "Actualité de Sade," pp. 3-5; and René Char, "Hommage à D.A.F. de Sade," p. 6.

One of the most remarkable examples of the interest in the phallic cult of the knife, so to speak, and its points of intersection with the sex crime is an article that appeared in Minotaure in 1936. Maurice Heine, one of the prime movers in the post-war salvage of the Marquis de Sade from literary obscurity,[208] wrote of a meeting of the ghosts of libertines and criminals. Sade himself plays a relatively small role, but the impact of the text and its illustrations is none the less sadistic for it. Sade and the Comte de Mesanges--apparently an early eighteenth-century aristocratic libertine--are discussing the various tortures which Mesanges inflicts upon the bodies of girls aged 15 to 17. They are interrupted by an equally shadowy Jack the Ripper, who proceeds to describe his blade, how its design prevents his being spattered with the blood of the victim, and the pleasure that its inanimate steel has given him:

> the crimson geyser which springs from an open throat, that is for me the unique prelude to the whimsical [fantasques] exploits of a good blade. With what

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[208] Heine first appeared in the pages of La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 12 (15 December, 1929), p. 70. He referred, not surprisingly, to Sade in response to the enquête usually called "Quelle sorte d'espoir mettez-vous dans l'amour?" Other notes on the salvage of Sade are discussed below.

> spirit will it then make child's play of slicing off the breasts, obviously destined for the decoration of night-tables...of cutting out kidneys and heart, offered on this thigh like gems in a case...of cutting off the nose and the ears of a face that a network of slashes renders decidedly anonymous.[209]

Behind the macabre dehumanization of the female form we recognize the attributes of Dalí's spectral women and Bellmer's collapsible Doll, and we are reminded of the breast-infatuation that led some artists to decorate, in addition to the night-tables, as it were, cubist paintings, book covers and a host of other inanimate articles.[210] In our fascination with this curious similarity, which continues to suggest that the Surrealists exalted the criminal act for its poetic properties, we have a tendency to forget that Jack's victim was in fact a locus of experience. Mary Kelly was her name, though she certainly appeared "anonymous" after Jack removed her breasts, heart and kidneys (fig. 72).[211]

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[209] Maurice Heine, "Regards sur l'enfer anthropoclassique," Minotaure, no. 8, (1936), p. 42.

[210] Picasso's La femme en chemise of c. 1913 is a synthetic cubist woman whose relatively realistic breasts are pinned to her body like wash on a line. Breton reproduced it in Le Surréalisme et la peinture, p. 6. Duchamp decorated the cover of the catalogue of Le Surréalisme en 1947 (Paris: Galerie Maeght, 1947) with a foam rubber breast. On the back were the words "Please touch." See Schwarz, pp. 522-3, cat. no. 328. Duchamp, like Picasso, was appropriated for Surrealism by Breton.

Neither Jack nor Heine nor the Surrealists had any intention of recognizing the humanity of Mary Kelly. At this extreme, the possibility of autonomous identity and sensibility is totally denied. Jack produces a photograph of a legless victim, joking that her legs run somewhere still. Yet he apologizes for the coroner's decision to sew the disembowelled corpse together (fig. 73),[212] as if to say that the least conscious part of a human being, the feet, are more deserving of integrity and self-identification than the real seat of experience, the head and the heart. The swinging body of the poor Catherine Eddowes is thus a grisly projection into the real world of the tendencies inherent in Bellmer's adolescent strippers. One might say that in both cases the perpetrator refuses to recognize something other than self. The flaying of the female body is thus an expression of both the will to power engendered by solipsism and a frenetic search for self behind the perceived illusion of the Other, so to speak. A solipsist would agree that the ultimate source of all factual knowledge is introspection or self-awareness, which certainly makes it seem that Surrealism in general leans towards, but perhaps falls just short of, solipsism.[213] But however much we want to read the disarticulation or stripping of a female body as operating on a symbolic level --perhaps as a metaphor for introspection or the peeling back of successive layers of consciousness--our visceral reaction to the images indicates that their symbolic character is partly or wholly lost precisely because of the reification of the symbol. In other words, the flayed female is made concrete. She is now a separate thing (a victim) and not merely a vehicle for the conception of some original element to be symbolized (introspection). She has become a substitute for the original. This is, in fact, a definition of fetishism in terms of psychopathological symbolism.[214] Moreover, this willful ignorance of the ideas lying behind forms which remains fascinating in themselves is a symptom of this century's mentality of appropriative primitivism. Picasso and a host of others had borrowed the forms of non-western art without awareness of their significance, believing all the while that this process was somehow pure, natural and true. Surrealists, too, have ignored potential meaning in favour of titillating or convulsive forms, once again unaware that such predispositions are in themselves sociocultural.[215] For example, Magritte once painted a scene of a male voyeur peeping through a keyhole at a woman's head. He was directly inspired by a postcard featuring a similar man peeping through a keyhole at a bathing female nude. Most criticism maintains that the artist used such images without making conscious reference to the meaning of the original.[216] However, the very fact that Magritte had unconsciously absorbed such imagery as part of his store of cultural referents compels one to acknowledge that he shares at least some of their presuppositions. Without the presence of some signifier of ironic intent or other device to collapse the voyeuristic intentions of the originals, such images can only compound the presence of a social common denominator: woman is made to be looked upon, according to the whims of the voyeur and, paradoxically, in order to satisfy her own exhibitionism.

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[211] She died in a room on Miller's Court, Spitalfields, Whitechapel on 9 November, 1888. Her body parts were displayed on a night table. The photograph was reproduced in Heine's article, but he ignored the factual information presented in his source, except as it contributed to the poetic _frisson_. For a factual account, see Daniel Farson, _Jack the Ripper_ (London: Michael Joseph, 1972). For a very interesting feminist interpretation, which tends to confirm that the popularity of the Ripper story is more about female passivity than about the "distinct material conditions that generate sexual antagonism and male violence," see Judith R. Walkowitz, "Jack the Ripper and the Myth of Male Violence," _Feminist Studies_, VIII, no. 3 (Fall, 1982), pp. 543-574.

[212] Heine, "Regards," p. 43. Jack asserts that only the lack of time prevented him from reducing the woman to a torso, something he claimed to have done to yet another victim. Current accounts say that there is some doubt whether this victim, Catherine Eddowes, was brutally maimed by Jack the Ripper himself. See S. Harold Scott, ed., _The Concise Encyclopedia of Crime and Criminals_ (New York: Hawthorn, 1961), pp. 197-8.

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[213] On introspection in general, see D. M. Armstrong, A Materialist Theory of the Mind (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1968), chapter 15. Surrealism has been described as solipsistic in some general accounts of little significance; see, for example, Herbert Muller, "Surrealism: A Dissenting Opinion," New Directions in Prose and Poetry, no. 5 (1940), pp. 548-62. However, the very term Surrealism implies some relation of self to Other, or the relations between interior and exterior worlds.

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[214] See especially, Hacker, p. 84. Also useful is Pollio, p. 5.

[215] Only André Masson has clearly aknowledged the gap between the original meanings of primitive arts and Western appreciation of them. See Maurer, p. 551. Anna Balakian has made much the same point, but without specific reference to primitivism. The continuance of forms is no guarantee that the ideas behind them will not be ignored. See her "André Breton as Philospher," Yale French Studies, XXXI, (1969), pp. 37-44.

[216] See Sylvester, pp. 62-3. Sylvester gives several examples of Magritte's use of erotic postcards. See figs. 16-18 and catalogue numbers 46, 59, 65 and 69. The painting mentioned in the text is L'Espion (1928).

Certainly there is nothing genuinely primitive about such cultural misapprehensions, but the reliance of artists on the very similar process of falsely naive appropriation of imagery is revealing. In neither case does the appropriating artist try to understand the original significance of his model. Thus, Magritte willfully ignored the potential meaning of erotic postcards, while Heine ignored Mary Kelly and Catherine Eddowes as loci of human experience. The meaning of women's bodies is that given to them by the male appropriator. As we have seen, this often consists of the revelation of the male principle within the female, otherwise expressed as the phallicized or fetishized female body.

The clearest examples of this tendency show how the misappropriation of women turns towards true misogyny. Women are hated and feared precisely because they are sexually different. In order to collapse this difference, one must project a phallus or discover one within the female body. The surest way of doing that is to enter into the body itself. Here we encounter a sort of transvestitism of the mind which is often indistinguishable from acts of extreme cruelty. The stage had been set in Heine's meeting of ghosts with a turn in concentration from the exploits of Jack the Ripper towards the effects of fire on the female body. Presented with grisly photographs of women who have been flayed and eviscerated by heat and flame (fig. 74), the shades implicitly agree with the delighted Marquis de Sade, whose only comment is: "The pleasant way to undress a woman!"[217] Clearly, the skin is considered as removable as cloth. What might be done with such cloth had been disturbingly foreshadowed in the youth of the artist Bellmer. Patrick Waldberg has told us that Bellmer had appalled his dictatorial father on a boat trip to Berlin by dressing as a girl.[218] This was supposed to have been done in a Dada spirit of provocation--Bellmer apparently waved a Georg Grosz pamphlet--but this now seems an inadequate explanation. We have already seen that Bellmer sought to dominate the female image for having made him realize the limitations of his sphere of influence. This was linked with his passion-curiosity, signs of a child-like and convalescent mind.[219] If his little girls flayed themselves, leaving their skins behind like rejected articles of clothing, then Bellmer could resolve the problems of projective identification in a horrifying manner. He proposed the construction of a costume from the dissassembled body parts:

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[217] Heine, "Regards," p. 45.

[218] Waldberg, "Hans Bellmer, ou l'écorcheur écorché," unpaginated. On his relations with his father, see Jelenski, p. 4.

> As for me, I wonder if I will wear the skin-tight trousers made from your seamless legs, adorned on the inside with spurious excrement? And do you think that, presuming I do not first faint away, I shall button on to my chest the heavy and trembling waistcoast of your breasts? As soon as I am fixed beneath the pleated skirt made of all your fingers...my sexual organ will appear from inside yours.[220]

The visual responses include a closet-full of fetishized female flesh (fig. 75), any item of which may be donned so that sexual difference is effectively destroyed (fig. 76). Increasingly disturbing, the Surrealist image of woman begins to fade like a mist enveloping a phallic idol. In other words, some Surrealist pictures of women appear not to be about Woman at all.

How did this paradox arise? The roots of it are sunk very deeply in patriarchal culture, in too many bewildering directions to follow here. In terms of the Surrealist's pronounced adherence to intellectual fashion, however, it is imperative to call once again on the shade of the Divine Marquis. The majority of his works feature the inhumane treatment of women--so much so, of course, that his very name provided us with the adjective sadistic. Most writers of the twentieth-century emphasize the philosophical features of Sade's works, or they read his tortures as metaphors of enlightened linguistic play, libertarian morality and dispassionate metaphysical discourse.[221] The Surrealists, too, had a polyvalent interest in Sade, but in keeping with their stand against interpretation they tended to express interest in the convulsive character of the writer's images themselves. Breton put it succinctly in the "Manifesto" (p. 26): "Sade is Surrealist in sadism." Bellmer's sadistic images bear a considerable affinity to Sade's descriptions, although the artist preferred to allude to the concept of sexual transgression as formulated by his contemporary, Georges Bataille.[222] The German artist's assertion that he admired Sade but found him unreadable is an unwitting acknowledgement that the myth of the libertine superseded his literary work. In contrast, René Magritte pointed rather directly at the libertine's work when he entitled his own vision of a closet of fetishized female flesh Philosophy in the Boudoir (fig. 77).

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[219] The implication of illness in this case has an overtone of mental strife. Marcel Jean, Meret Oppenheim and Patrick Waldberg have all described Bellmer to me in private conversation as more a psychological case study than an artist. I do not profess to be able to distinguish where one begins and the other ends.

[220] This is an excerpt of a love-letter reprinted in "L'Anatomie de l'image," Obliques, numéro spécial: Hans Bellmer, p. 138.

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[221] Notable examples include Roland Barthes, Sade/Fourier/Loyola, trans. R. Miller (New York: Hill and Wang, 1976); Georges Bataille, "Sade et l'homme normal," in Marquis de Sade, Oeuvres Complètes, vol. 6 (Paris: Cercle du livre précieux, 1966), pp. 45-65; Pierre Klossowski, Sade mon prochain (Paris: Seuil, 1967); and most thoroughly, Roberta J. Hackel, De Sade's Quantitative Moral Universe of Irony, Rhetoric and Boredom (The Hague and Paris: Mouton, 1976).

Sade's book of this title was first published in 1795 and consisted of seven dialogues, explicit sexual narratives alternating with philosophical diatribes. The latter, presented in part by Sade's spokesman Dolmancé, reflect some of the attitudes of the contemporary French Revolution, for it was largely written when Sade was imprisoned in the Bastille for crimes ranging from blasphemy and corruption of minors to procurement for the practice of sodomy.[223] One finds, for example, protests against the power of the Catholic Church, its moral restrictions and even its deity. Occasionally one even encounters a straightforward revolutionary rallying cry, as in his pamphlet, "Frenchmen, more effort if you wish to be republicans."[224] It is no surprise that the author's work should have been so highly regarded by the Surrealists; they, too, were fascinated by the French Revolution, by anti-clericalism and by sexual innovation. It has even been suggested that the Surrealists were themselves responsible for the introduction of a multiple reading of Sade, though they were certainly indebted to the work of predecessors and contemporaries like Guillaume Apollinaire and Maurice Heine.[225] All this would seem very admirable, were it not for the essential contradiction of Sade's work. In *Philosophy in the Boudoir*, for instance, Dolmancé supports some contemporary feminist values when he advocates abortion as a feminine means of achieving freedom of sexual expression (*Oeuvres complètes*, III; p. 394). However, this not only places all responsibility for birth control on women, it also requires that they submit to a dangerous medical practice. Some assert that Juliette, the adept seductress-murdress of the book of same name, is so dominant that there is reason to see a woman as the true Sadeian hero(ine),[226] but there is a contradiction here as well. Juliette is always under the control of a male--first Noirceuil, then Saint-Fond (Oeuvres complètes, VIII-IX; passim.)--and she has no civil or monetary rights (Oeuvres complètes, IX; p. 86). To a certain extent, this type of situation reflects and foreshadows the same contradictions as they appeared in the French Revolution. Female political involvement had been demanded by the male philosopher Marie-Jean-Antoine Condorcet in his Letters of a Bourgeois of Newhaven to a Citizen of Virginia of 1787. In 1791, the year in which Juliette was first fully published, the early feminist Olympe de Gouges wrote a Declaration of the Rights of Women and of the Female Citizen. At the height of the revolutionary Terror of 1793, these positive steps were sadly reversed. The Convention declared in April that women, the demented, minors and criminals were not citizens. In October, women's political groups were suppressed. In November, Olympe de Gouges was decapitated for "having forgotten the virtues which belong to her sex."[227] And of course, Napoleon's civil code of 1804 consecrated the inferiority of women and their total submission to marital authority. The relations between Surrealist attitudes to women and those of the society which they supposedly rejected are similarly contradictory and compelling. This will be discussed below; let it suffice for the moment that French women would not receive the right to vote until April of 1944, two decades after Surrealism sought to declare the new rights of man.

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[222] See the interview in Webb, pp. 367-9.

[223] Biographical information and an overview of Philosophy in the Boudoir are given in Lawrence W. Lynch, The Marquis de Sade (Boston: Twayne, 1984), pp. 7-14, 26-31.

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[224] *Français, encore un effort; extrait de "La Philosophie dans le Boudoir"* (Paris: Pauvert, 1965). Even this is subject to a proto-Surrealist phantasm playing a role in subject/object relations. See Jacques Lacan, "Kant avec Sade," *Critique*, 191 (April, 1963), 291-313. Subsequent references to Sade's other works will be to the *Oeuvres Complètes*, and will be retained in the text.

[225] The poet Apollinaire had written introductions to Sade as early as 1909 and 1914, when the libertine's work had been forgotten in the *Bibliothèque nationale*. Heine contributed notes on Sade to *Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution*, nos. 2, 3 and 5, as well as to *Minotaure*, nos. 1, 5 and 8. These and other aspects of the gradual unveiling of Sade to the Surrealists are discussed in two important articles: Raymond Jean, "Sade et le surréalisme," in *Le Marquis de Sade. Colloque du centre Aixois d'Etudes et de Recherches sur le 18^{e} siècle, les 19-20 fevrier 1968* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1968), pp. 241-252; and J. H. Matthews, "The Right Person for Surrealism," *Yale French Studies*, XXXV (December, 1965), pp. 89-95.

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[226] See, for example, Guy Molino, "Sade devant la beauté," in Le Marquis de Sade. Colloque du centre Aixois, p. 166.

Eugénie, the female protagonist of the narrative portions of Philosophy in the Boudoir, is, like Juliette, only superficially a dominant, enfranchised woman. She victimizes other women chiefly for the amusement of her captors. She is no more capable of freedom than were the African blacks who aided the slave traders oppressing their countrymen. Eugénie is a young convent girl about to be deflowered. Her origins in the practice of a faith make her a perfect vehicle for the expression of anti-clerical sentiment. (This device appears again and again in Surrealist work. Max Ernst's Rêve d'une petite fille qui voulut entrer au Carmel, a collage-novel of 1930, is a perfect example). Eugénie is first initiated into the mysteries of libertinage when she is raped with the assistance of her predecessor, the ironically named dominatrix Mme. de Saint-Ange. The criminality of the act is justified by the fact that virtue and religion, both antirevolutionary sentiments, are metaphorically eliminated on the moral-sexual and political-philosophical levels. The young girl soon passes from victim to aggressor; as such, she is less an example of an emancipated female exercising her power than a substitute for Sade himself. For example, one of Eugénie's first deeds is to assist in the rape of her mother, whom she holds in contempt. The deed is achieved by a syphilitic. The mother's vagina is then sewn up so she will have no opportunity to cleanse herself of the disease (see note 238). Now, Sade himself acknowledged that his mother, an overpious, stern and frigid woman, and his mother-in-law, who harrassed him until he considered her a whore, together imbued him with "an intense hatred of everything female."[228] The heterosexual act therefore had either to be accompanied by brutality or to be replaced by a homosexual act. In fact, in the vast majority of cases these alternatives are effectively fused, for all of Sade's male protagonists share their author's distaste of female sexual characteristics. Sade found the vagina "ugly in comparison with the genitals of a male,"[229] and breasts, which had maternal connotations, could be brutally severed as psycho-physiologically redundant, so to speak. It is for these reasons, of course, that Sade responded so positively to Jack the Ripper in Heine's fictitious meeting of the minds.

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[227] See the extensive chronology in Marks and Courtivion, p. 16.

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[228] See Hilary E. Holt, "Introduction" to Sade's 120 Days of Sodom, pp. vi-vii. An extended discussion is Jane Gallop, "Sade, Mothers and Other Women," Enclitic, IV, no. 2 (Fall, 1980), pp. 60-68.

[229] Holt, "Introduction" to Sade's 120 Days of Sodom, p. xi.

In some Surrealist art one sees a duplication of female body parts. Current critical theory sees this process of doubling up as a virtual sign of the gap that exists between any form and its meaning. Rosalind Krauss, for example, believes that since the concept of, say, blueness has nothing to do with the word blue, there will always be a critical void between any code and message--a void which can be filled by the interpretations and expectations of the viewer. For reasons like these, she sees Surrealist photography as particularly concerned with a semiotic process of reading reality as signs, as representation.[230] This reconfirms the words with which this chapter was begun --Breton's "forest of signs." But there is an insurmountable problem with this kind of reading: how does the viewer avoid being incorporated into the world-representation of the artist?[231] The doubling of body parts can only be a generic expression of Surrealism's goals as language. The specific sign has meanings which may be read as indices to their intellectual contexts. In simple words, the multiplication of breasts seen in an untitled photograph by Man Ray (fig. 78) is not merely a device which says "this is the gap between code and message" as Krauss might have it; it is also potentially a reference to mythological sources (see chapter II) or to literary precedents. The supernumerary breasts recall the Sadeian notion of redundancy noted above. They do this not only through unnecessary duplication but also by not having any clear relation to the text in which they appear, a disjointed, Surreal account by Max Morise.[232] Though they appear to illustrate the text because of their off-centre placement--an impression which is all the stronger when one compares the symmetrical lay-out featuring a Masson drawing on the facing page--there is no explanation for their presence. While they are conceptually and functionally redundant, they satisfy the criteria of Breton's convulsive beauty. They are Uncanny; they attract and repel, creating a new frisson.

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[230] Krauss's arguments are presented in three quite important essays: "The Photographic Conditions of Surrealism," in her Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1985), pp. 87-118; and "Photography in the Service of Surrealism" and "Corpus Delecti," both in L'Amour fou: Photography and Surrealism, pp. 13-55 and 55-100 respectively.

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[231] This is discussed in the Introduction and the Conclusion. Two excellent criticisms of Krauss's position are Foster, pp. 116-29, and Mary Ann Caws, "Ladies Shot and Painted: Female Embodiment in Surrealist Art," in Susan Rubin Suleiman, ed. The Female Body in Western Culture. Contemporary Perspectives (Cambridge: Harvard, 1986), pp. 262-287.

[232] Max Morise, untitled Surrealist text in La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1 (1 Dec., 1924), pp. 15-16.

And one of the key characteristics of the Sadeian novel is the inexorable, slow progress of the search for new thrills, so much so that they begin to read like catalogues of perversions. So too, does a survey of Surrealist sexual art.

Sade was the great predecessor in affairs of this sort, and most of the artists of Surrealism invoked his name even when they did not read his works in detail. Bellmer has already been mentioned in this regard. Nevertheless, the _imprimatur_, the stamp of approval, which Sade gives to sadistic pornography allows extreme license. Bellmer multiplied breasts in an attempt to impose upon women the "geometric and algebraic habits of his thought"--not at all to confirm the semiological aims of Surrealism or to note a chance likeness to the multi-breasted Diana of Ephesus.[233] To assist himself in this operation, he drew on the excesses of extant sadistic imagery. He remembered a photograph in which

> a man, to transform his victim, had tightly tied up her thighs, her shoulders, her breast with iron wire intersecting haphazardly, provoking bulges of flesh, irregular spheric triangles, straightening out the wrinkles, the smutty lips, multiplying never-before-seen breasts in shameful places.[234]

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[233] See _Obliques, numéro spécial: Hans Bellmer_, p. 132.

[234] Ibid., p. 131.

A related drawing of 1956, Victime ficelée (bound victim, fig. 79) makes no allusion to more palatable or elevated subject matter, as do Michelangelo's Bound Slaves, for example.[235] It is instead a provocation, participating fully in the ideology of oppression that constitutes pornography, intellectual (Sade) or not (postcards).[236] Nor is the image a mere pictorial fantasy, for two years later Bellmer subjected his mistress Unica Zürn to precisely the same process of redundancy through multiplication (fig. 80). Such a photograph combines most of the tendencies we have touched upon in this chapter in a uniquely unsettling vision of Woman as the eternally wounded thing upon which men project their fantasies and frustrations. An entire series of photographs of Zürn in this debased condition was exhibited as high art at the Centre Pompidou in late 1983. Few of the spectators were made aware that the object of this obscure "affection" had committed suicide, albeit twelve years after the photographs were made. Once again, a woman has been denied as a locus of human experience.[237]

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[235] Reproduced and discussed in Charles de Tolnay, Michelangelo, IV: the Tomb of Julius II (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970), passim.

[236] On this distinction, see Susan Sontag, "The Pornographic Imagination," from Styles of Radical Will (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 1969), reprinted in Bataille, The Story of the Eye, pp. 82-118.

The gradually ascending curve of violation that has been traced in this chapter is itself an innovation of the Marquis de Sade. Virtually all his tales compound instances of sexual violence in such a way that the reader is continually horrified by ever more extreme liberties. One proceeds from the sexual initiation of Eugénie, for example, to sodomy and the sexual appropriation of other parts of the body. Although this process is usually accompanied by a discourse on nature's insults to human endeavours or political rhetoric of one sort or another, the cumulative effect is numbing, intellectually deadening rather than enlightening.[238] Looking at an extended series of Surrealist pictures has something of the same effect, whether they directly illustrate Sade or not. There are related drawings and paintings by Dalí in such numbers that discussion of them in this context would be overwhelming. Many show fingers poking at an anus, others the attempted penetration of an armpit (fig. 54) or forced fellation, and still others the extremely physical blasphemies which Sade both practiced and wrote about.[239] The nearness of death can heighten orgasm, an assumption which Masson illustrated in a drawing for Sade's Justine (1928, fig. 81). A struggling female swings by her neck, her genitalia prominent beneath her bound and clutching hands. To her right is a sketchy male figure which appears to masturbate while raising a knife in the direction of the rope, as if to stop death in its tracks. Other drawings pass beyond these frontiers of death. Leonor Fini, for example, illustrated Sade's Juliette in 1944 with fragments of a human body, grotesquely impaled and vividly rendered (fig. 82). The common element at all these points along the ascending curve of outrages is a continual refusal to acknowledge sexual difference. Castration anxiety leads some men to project their phalluses onto the bodies of women so that they can unconsciously contemplate their *own* sexuality even as they pretend to enjoy the other. For this process to work, the projection must be veiled, subtly obscured in order to work on the unconscious male viewer-voyeur.[240] If the fetishization of Woman is too obvious, as Hal Foster has pointed out,[241] the resolution of the castration anxiety breaks down and the phallus-projection becomes a weapon-wielding, a sadistic lashing out. But the two processes are really indistinguishable in cases of the transvestitism of the mind; in order for the male to enter into the guise of the female, he must first empty her of her original and unique substance. Sade's Eugénie and his other superficially dominant females are simply disguises for the Sadeian personality, like the fleshy items in Bellmer's and Magritte's closets. This personality is incapable of accounting for a kind of pleasure not known to men. Even though Sade recognized the sexual role of the female's vagina and clitoris, he still recommended sodomy as a source of superior pleasure. Moreover, he implied a structural similarity between sodomized males and females--that is, either sex could be masturbated with the hands while being sodomized.[242] This similarity further undermines sexual difference. In fact, the Sadeian personality is one which believes that "any enjoyment is weakened when shared."[243]

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[237] On Zürn as an artist and human being, see the collection of short essays under the heading "Unica Zürn" in La Femme surréaliste: Obliques, no. 14-15 (Paris: Editions Borderie, 1977), pp. 252-66. She leapt from a window on the 19th of October, 1970. I do not mean to imply that she did so directly as a result of her treatment twelve years earlier.

[238] A very good example of this is the gradual corruption of Eugénie, which is accompanied by so many definitions of terms of libertinage and such a workmanlike catalogue of deviations that the mind ceases to respond. What is left is the visceral will to be satisfied. See The Complete Justine, especially "Dialogue the Third," pp. 196ff.

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[239] See the Pompidou catalogue Salvador Dalí, rétrospective, figs. 95, 98, 100, 101 and passim.

[240] Jacques Lacan maintains both that the phallus is the "privileged signifier" in our post-Freudian era and that the phallus can play its signifying role only when veiled. An excellent discussion of these points in Jane Gallop, "Of Phallic Proportions: Lacanian Conceit," in her Psychoanalysis and Feminism: The Daughter's Seduction (London: Macmillan, 1982), pp. 15-32.

Sade's writings establish a dialogue between the author, as aristocratic oppressor, and his pseudofeminine substitutes. The remainder are victims, like the "appalling cloaca" that he sees when he surveys the unaristocratic poor.[244] The Sadeian personality is one which leans towards solipsism. This is no less true when one considers the situation as a kind of linguistic play, for hidden in the "forest of signs" (reality as representation) is the assumption that the author or artist is distinct, unique and inviolate. The equation in Sade between the solipsist and his pseudo-feminine substitute is paralleled in a drawing by Bellmer entitled *Peppermint Tower in Praise of Greedy Little Girls* (fig. 83). Here is a young girl built of large bricks, a kind of anthropomorphic castle in fact. She is a fairly shallow allusion to the haunted fortress mentality that runs rampant in the works of Sade and reappears in those of Breton. In the latter, the fortress or castle or chateau is an evocative place peopled with spirits that act as metaphors of poorly understood unconscious functions of the mind. In the former, the fortress is the place in which the majority of sexual violations take place. There are three allusions to be considered: first is the marquis's own chateau of La Coste, to which several of the Surrealists made pilgrimages in homage;[245] second is the Bastille, where Sade was imprisoned; and third is the mind of the marquis himself, an equation pictorially realized in Man Ray's *Imaginary Portrait of the Marquis de Sade* as a brick stronghold similar to that in Bellmer's *Peppermint Tower*.[246] The girl-chateau in the latter is, like Eugénie in Sade's *Philosophy*, a pseudo-feminine disguise for the violator. We have already seen that Bellmer blames his victims for their own misfortunes, so we are not surprised to find the violator watching as fetishized body parts in the foreground impale themselves with a peppermint stick. The very name of this phallic substitute heightens the sadistic and Sadeian impact of the scene, for *Tour menthe poivrée* (peppermint tower) can also be read as *tourmente poivrée* (tempest spiced with licentiousness) and even *tourment poivré* (torment inflicted with veneral disease). The last example especially recalls Eugénie's treatment of her mother, and it should be noted in passing that some writers think it is the hatred of mothers and motherhood that is the root of all misogyny.[247] Certainly it rings true in Sade's case.

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[241] Foster, p. 122.

[242] Sade, Complete Justine, pp. 202, 204.

[243] See Holt in Sade's 120 Days, pp. iii, xii.

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[244] John Fraser has written that one of the most bogus attitudes is that of the libertarian who is against the constraints of society at the very moment he takes full advantage of them. See his *Violence in the Arts* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1974), p. 140. See also his remarks on Simone de Beauvoir, p. 89.

[245] See Chadwick, *Women Artists*, fig. 90.

If all of these assumptions are true, if not in objective fact then at least in the more ambiguous world of intellectual and cultural predispositions, then it is motherhood which the Sadeian personality attacks, even as it begins to merge with the Nietzschean, convalescent, and childish components of the Surrealist personality. It is tempting to say that motherhood is denied because the Surrealist is childishly jealous of the mother's attentions, but the situation is a good deal more complicated than that. Woman's primary responsibility is the exaltation of the male. She can only achieve this when she poses no threat--that is, when she is phallicized. If she asserts sexual difference through pregnancy, she will be attacked, unwombed even. Given this, we are not surprised to learn that the greatest of all the Surrealists' literary predecessors is also occasionally, shockingly antifemale.

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[246] One version is reproduced in Penrose, p. 135, fig. 88.

[247] See, for example, Gabrielle Rubin, *Les Sources inconscientes de la misogynie* (Paris: Laffont, 1977), pp. 107-128, especially p. 112.

f) Lautréamont

Isidore Ducasse, whose pen-name was the comte de Lautréamont, was idolized from the earliest days of the Surrealist movement. Man Ray made his wrapped and bound Enigma of Isidore Ducasse in 1921, though it was first reproduced in the preface of La Révolution Surréaliste, no. 1 (1 December, 1924). Masson has asserted that he knew Lautréamont's seminal Les Chants de Maldoror (1869) in 1922 and that it became an icon of sorts in the Bureau de recherches surréalistes from the day it first opened its doors.[248] In an essay of 1950 which is still one of the best of its kind, Wallace Fowlie argued that Lautréamont was an icon indeed, much more to the Surrealists than a mere literary figure. He virtually created a new realm in which language became a kind of "dissolving power" which would break conventional reality down and reconstitute its parts into "a reality which is not translatable into language." The distinctions between normal consciousness and madness or perversity are collapsed in a new "state of mind" clearly related to a "career of evil."[249] Not surprisingly, Fowlie found that Lautréamont's Maldoror established for Surrealists a myth of the artist, in turn based upon the writings of Baudelaire. The character Maldoror embodies the only three types of men that Baudelaire had found respectable: the priest, whose function it was to know; the warrior, whose function it was to kill; and the poet, whose function it was to create.[250] Maldoror enacts these roles and expresses the inner nature of the artist, who knows transcendently like a priest in ecstasy, who kills in obedience to a primitive urge like a horrified warrior, and who synthesizes the ecstasy and the horror in his poetic creations. Maldoror is the prime role-model for the Surrealist artist, for he recapitulates and synthesizes virtually all aspects of the convalescent-child-primitive that have passed before. He stands at the dawn of a new era of potential evil, so to speak, so it is no surprise that his name puns on the French words meaning "evil of day-break," mal d'aurore.

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[248] Masson, "Le peintre et ses fantasmes," in Le Rebelle, p. 31. See in the same volume his laudatory essays on Lautréamont and Sade, "Le roi fou à la couronne de flammes" and "Note sur l'imagination sadique," pp. 67-69.

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[249] Fowlie, pp. 32-3.

[250] Ibid., p. 41.

The key to almost all of Surrealist production which is not expressly a matter of automatism is the famous simile from Maldoror: "as beautiful as the chance encounter of a sewing machine and an umbrella on a dissection table." This juxtaposition of hitherto unrelated elements is the foundation of the Surrealist object, collage, dream displacements and condensations, the convulsive poetic image, and so forth. However, the phrase carries within it a note of cruelty that transforms its rather transparent metaphoric eroticism. A more recent translation makes this clear:

> He is fair...as the uncertainty of the muscular movements in wounds in the soft parts of the lower cervical region...; and above all, as the chance meeting on a dissecting table of a sewing machine and an umbrella.[251]

The protagonist is describing Mervyn, a beautiful youth of sixteen years and four months. He is not merely suggesting sexual intercourse; he is adding to it allusions to maimed or dissected body parts, particularly the female ones evoked by the sewing machine and cervix. Hidden within an image fundamental to Surrealism is the same type of preconception discussed above. Not only is the proper sexual partner presented as a male, any clear reference to females is accompanied by attacks upon their maternal option, so to speak, or by simple degradation. This is confirmed elsewhere in the book: in Canto III, Maldoror and his bulldog rape a young girl and disembowel her through her generative organs (pp. 92-3); in Canto V, a beetle's ball of dung is equated with a woman's corpse (p. 147); and so on. Meanwhile, the book is full of laudatory phallic symbols. They range from a self-portrait of the author as a crocodile-phallus, whose story is like "vomit that gushed from his cranium" (Canto II, p. 84), to straightforward pronouncements that his "privates everlastingly present the lugubrious spectacle of everlasting tumescence" (Canto V, p. 158). Maldoror puts it succinctly:

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[251] Lautréamont, p. 177. Subsequent references are retained in the text. It is interesting that Maldoror sees Mervyn in the rue Vivienne, where Lautréamont actually lived. See note 141.

> I do not like women! Nor even hermaphrodites! I must have beings who resemble me, upon whose brows human nobility is etched in more distinct and ineffaceable characters!
>
> (Canto V, p. 157)

Far from evincing a mere Romantic taste for solitude, this passage reveals what might be called a predestined alienation, if not actual solipsism. Given that the Surrealists most profitably cultivated this aspect of

Lautréamont's Maldoror over any particular incident,[252] it is imperative that we briefly turn to a tangential consideration of male visions of Woman versus female ones. But first let us look back over the path we have followed: we have argued that some of the roots of the strange, supposedly revolutionary Surrealist mentality are buried deep within the intellectual assumptions bequeathed to Surrealists by their literary forefathers. Armed with this battery of ambiguous attitudes, they tried to break with the restricting social customs of their own time. The roles allotted by them to the women joining in this struggle for liberation were manipulated in three ways: first, by culturally-determined misapprehensions of what constituted femininity; second, by misappropriations of women whose own social restrictions had been compounded, not relieved, by distorted definitions of their femininity; and third, by misogynistic inclinations that were an intricate network of psychological, cultural and sociological tensions. When we realize that these tensions were only relieved when their bearer adopted the disposition to ignore or actively to elide sexual difference and that this disposition was incorporated into a programme of social upheaval, we realize that we have come full circle. The largest sign in the Surrealists' "forest of signs" was the one which reminded them to "come to a new declaration of the rights of man." And, presumably, that man was the Maldoror in every one of them.

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[252] Masson illustrated Lautréamont's Oeuvres complètes (Paris: Cahiers G.L.M., 1938) with unremarkable and straightforward representations of events in the text. See, for example, the scene of Maldoror copulating with a shark, entitled Vieil Océan, ô grand célibataire (1937), reproduced in Lanchner, "André Masson: Origins and Development," in Rubin and Lanchner, p. 149. Dalí had earlier illustrated Les Chants de Maldoror (Geneva: Skira, 1934) with somewhat more inventive engravings. See the whole suite reproduced under the heading "Les Chants de Maldoror" in Salvador Dalí, rétrospective, pp. 330-339. Nearly everyone from Oscar Domínguez to Konrad Klapheck made images with sewing machines and/or umbrellas, almost all of which seem remarkably uninspired.

Chapter IV: Men's Woman, Women's Woman

a) "Our Polished Members"

Maldoror, mal d'aurore--it is not too far-fetched to surmise that the pun connotes something of the awakening of adolescent sexuality. The evil of daybreak would then be the first stirrings of phallic autonomy that made the adolescent aware of his fall from an androgynous state of sorts. Yet this androgyny would not have been thought of as the zenith of human development, but as a prelogical child's awareness of self before puberty's mechanisms awaken sexual difference.[1] This is precisely why Maldoror sings a hermaphrodite to sleep in his second canto, for if the latter were to awake, the awareness of his separated sexuality would create evil.[2] And what is the recourse of a suddenly tumescent teenager, if not to images, mostly pornographic, or to prostitutes? In 1939, one of the expelled Surrealists, Michel Leiris, published an autobiographical account entitled L'âge d'homme (manhood) which confirms this observation. Not only was the protagonist compelled to masturbate while looking at images that he nonetheless found vulgar and unlikable, he also discovered the exciting flavour of the antique slave-market reborn in the contemporary brothels of Paris--which he began to patronize at about twelve years of age.[3] The rest of Leiris's story is filled with observations concerning two of the Surrealist archetypes of Woman--the masochistic Lucretia and the castrating Judith--and the bizarre imagery, worthy of Maldoror himself in places, that often linked them together:

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[1] Cf. Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock, Old Mistresses: Women, Art, and Ideology (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1981), p. 138.

[2] Lautréamont, pp. 50-1. Cf. the interpretation of Wallace Fowlie, Lautréamont (New York: Twayne, 1973), p. 42. Elsewhere, Fowlie states that Lautréamont is an adolescent poet. See his Age of Surrealism, p. 32.

> I cannot conceive of love save in torment and tears; nothing moves me so much as a woman weeping, unless it is a Judith with murderous eyes. Looking back to my earliest childhood, I find memories connected with stories of wounded women (pp. 42-3).

Later, he realized that he regarded

> the female organ as something dirty, or as a wound, no less attractive for that, but dangerous in itself, like everything bloody, mucous, and contaminated (p. 46).

And what purpose is served by recording these unsavoury images? Leiris is unequivocal: literary activity's only justification is

> *to illuminate certain matters for oneself at the same time as one makes them communicable to others...* (pp. 163-4, his italics).

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[3] Michel Leiris, *Manhood: A Journey from Childhood into the Fierce Order of Virility*, trans. R. Howard (San Francisco: North Point Press, 1984), pp. 53 and 31, respectively. Subsequent references are retained in the text.

The author's pretense was standard Surrealist practice. He claimed to plumb the depths of his own mind, all the while failing to disclose the extent to which his interiority was a pastiche of well-worn conventions. Indeed, Leiris's frequent references to such things as the sacred, sacrifice, and even enucleated eyes makes it clear that he was a heterodox Surrealist, a member of the same camp as Bataille and Masson. Besides, Leiris's explicit equation of Lucretia's dagger to an erection (p. 94) makes it clear that the dawn of evil is the awakening of the phallus as well as the birth of the otherness, the heterogeneity, of Woman.

If both orthodox and heterodox Surrealists were indeed budding Maldorors, then their endless transformations of Woman have much less to do with what Rosalind Krauss suggests is a proto-feminist deconstruction of the subject[4] than with the psychology of pornography. If we sidestep the thorny problems of definition, artistic merit, effects on behavior, and all of the other questions which have stimulated so much fruitful debate, we can concentrate on what seems to be the lowest common denominator of pornography--to elicit a physiological sex response in order to satisfy desire, while the phantom possibility of renewal lurks nearby.[5] The various guises of Woman cannot be detached from their symbolic and practical functions in this scheme. Moreover, plurisignificant images, like the prostitute, the hysteric, the sacrificial victim, and all the others, will be most satisfactory because their open-endedness offers both variety and the possibility of a veiled phallus. While the former allows for repeated excitation, the latter assures the spectator that his own phallus--the psychic spectacle of everlasting tumescence, to paraphrase Lautréamont--will be unconsumed even as his real penis yields. This is not to advocate seriously that Surrealist images of women were intended to provoke masturbation, although Dalí's notion of continuous ecstacy comes close to this (see chapter I). Instead, we speak of the reification of a symbol of sexual potency, of phallic idolatry as the rhetoric of control, the satisfaction of desire on the imaginative plane, the possibility of renewal, and the search for novelty. It would be incorrect to assume that this rhetoric is a disposable subject matter and that Surrealism has much to offer in the way of practice outside of its lamentable infatuations. The most circumspect way to demonstrate that Surrealist behavior itself is a paradigm of the pornographic structure, as it were, is to follow the footsteps of two Surrealists who, like Leiris, wandered freely between autobiography and convention, the freely found and the *recherché*.

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[4] "Corpus delecti," in L'amour fou: Photography and Surrealism, p. 95.

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[5] The bibliography is, of course, enormous and continues to grow daily. A still-useful introduction is Eberhard and Phyllis Kronhausen, "Pornography, the Psychology of," in Ellis and Abarbanel, II, pp. 848-859. A recent article which expressly links Surrealism to pornography, while collapsing false distinctions between high art and low sources of excitation, is Gubar, pp. 712-741.

Trying to find the phallus, the idolator's sign of permanence, in images which lead to detumescence, a sign of transcience, is like trying to distill "the eternal from the transitory." This is precisely what Baudelaire said the dandy was most capable of doing, and it must always be borne in mind that the Surrealists were very much dandies.[6] Of course, the Surrealists were not mere figures of fashion but Baudelairean *flâneurs*: they could pass through the streets with an aristocratic coldness like "a latent fire which... chooses not to burst into flame," as Baudelaire put it. The Romantic poet's proto-Surrealist simile was intended to justify artistic dandyism as "a kind of cult of the self which can nevertheless survive the pursuit of happiness to be found in someone else--in woman, for example."[7] There are no clearer examples of the Surrealist dandy than Louis Aragon and André Breton, both of whom found themselves by pursuing happiness in the arms of women.

The very fashionable streets in which the Baudelairean dandy strolled in the Second Empire were the same streets frequented sixty years later by the Surrealists. Aragon was particularly fascinated with the still fashionable section of the Grands Boulevards near the Paris Opéra. He sought there an answer to a question posed by Breton as early as 1920. The latter had then described some of de Chirico's paintings as modern equivalents of the sphinx, inasmuch as they raised as many questions as they answered. He went on to proclaim that a new mythology was in formation, and his call for a new sphinx was understood by Aragon and others as a search for similarly unanswerable images, all of which had to be indicative of the Surrealist exchange or coextension of interior and exterior realities.[8] In 1924, Aragon began publishing a series of accounts of such exchanges which--though they did take place--indeed constituted a new mythology. He published all his findings in 1926, in a work entitled Paysan de Paris, the Paris peasant.

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[6] Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life*, p. 12.

[7] Ibid., p. 29 and p. 27, respectively.

The first section of Paysan was appropriately entitled "Preface to a Modern Mythology." Here, Aragon immediately made it clear that one of his means of transforming the world was to accept automatically, without reservation, the disordering effects of objective chance. It is, however, imperative to note that Surrealism's objective chance is not what is meant by conventional chance at all. In fact, it is much closer to the psychological determinism of Freud's parapraxis and omnipotence of thought: certain events come about because a subject, unknown to himself, wishes them to take place. Aragon extended the principle to a poetic intervention of the real, as it were:

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[8] André Breton, "Giorgio de Chirico: 12 Tavole in Fototipia," Littérature, no. 11 (January 1920); reprinted as "Giorgio de Chirico" in Breton's Les pas perdus, pp. 94-5. See the thorough discussion in Legge, pp. 50-3.

> ...the errors of my fingers and of my eyes...are not merely crude snares but peculiar roads toward a goal which they alone can reveal to me.... I want to reflect on nothing but these scorned transformations.... A mythology becomes knotted and comes undone.[9]

Just as the Freudian slip has a hidden meaning, so too does Aragon's wandering, as if he is driven down a path where "New myths are born beneath each of our steps" (p. 13). Aragon is a new dandy, bent on seizing the eternal from the transitory; and for him, the epitome of the transitory was a favourite haunt--an appropriate word, given its multiple connotations--called the *Passages de l'opéra*, at that very moment threatened with demolition.

The second part of *Paysan de Paris* is entitled "The Passage de l'opéra" and is in part an extended description of a pair of arcades flanked by numerous shops. They were originally built to provide access to a predecessor of the opera house, while also affording a fashionable place to shop and to display oneself, much like today's malls. They were to be torn down during the Second Empire as part of the development of the Grands Boulevards, but the project was delayed until 1924. Then, the never-ending Parisian traffic problem necessitated the extension of the Boulevard Haussmann right through the triangular plot on which the passages sat.[10] Given the pending displacement of the tenants, Aragon could only read the passages as areas of transit, of dislocation, models of the Surrealist unease sought by nearly everyone from de Chirico forward. Moreover, the arcades themselves were a half-world of sorts, dark during the day and illuminated at night. At all times they were inside and outside at once, a fusion of contraries quite in keeping with Breton's later characterization of Surrealism as a search for

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[9] Louis Aragon, *Paysan de Paris* (Paris: Gallimard, 1926), p. 13. Subsequent references will be retained in the text. I have translated the passages in this chapter from the original texts in order to avoid some of the problems posed by available English translations.

> a certain point of the mind at which life and death, the real and the imagined, past and future, the communicable and the incommunicable, high and low, cease to be perceived as contradictions.[11]

Thus metaphorically prepared for his own removal to the twilight zone of the Surreal, Aragon could describe the passages as a modern maze:

> the labyrinth without a Minotaur where, transfigured like the Virgin,

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[10] A full history, diagrams, and photographs are in Geist, pp. 116-118, 476-485.

[11] "Second manifesto of Surrealism," p. 123.

> radium-fingered Error reappears, my singing mistress, my pathetic shadow (pp. 133-4).

Here, Aragon's automatism takes the form of a muse whose very name, Error, reveals her roots in objective chance and parapraxis, just as the silent stones of Aragon's new maze constitute a metaphor of his own mind:

> Where humans pursue their most ambiguous activities, the inanimate sometimes reflects their more secret motives: our cities are thus populated with unrecognized sphinxes who do not halt the passing dreamer to ask him questions of life and death if he doesn't turn towards them his meditative absence of mind.... It is his own abysses that, thanks to these faceless monsters, he is going to probe (p. 18).

The exploration of the real city in real time is an equivalent of the exploration of the self. The one could not take place without the other. However, the search is always accompanied by "the modern light of the weird,... which partakes of the sudden clarity under a skirt raised by a bare leg" (pp. 18-19). The spectres of desire, female sexuality, and inspiration are thus inseparable components of this most fundamental Surrealist practice.

The generation of Surrealist images, which Aragon described as a narcotic which "forces you to revise the entire Universe" (p. 80), is intimately bound up with sexual expectation. And who does Aragon expect to meet but prostitutes lurking in doorways. Curiously, this phenomenon is fixed in an anonymous photograph of a girl in a doorway, reproduced in La Révolution Surréaliste in 1926 (fig. 84). It accompanies an article on bridges and suicide, which also occupied Aragon for a good part of the third section of Paysan de Paris. Spotting such streetwalkers, Aragon likens the arcade to a glass coffin, within which an eternal game of love and death is played out (p. 42). Soon even the prosaic Baths at the end of the arcade become "temples of an ambiguous cult [resembling alike] the brothel and places of magic" (p. 63). The whole world, synecdochically represented by its fragment, has become eroticized by the poet's manipulation of objective chance. The prostitute is a catalyst and the erotic temple is synonymous with thought, just as it was in the case of Masson's Bâillon vert à bouche de pensée (fig. 31; pp. 149-51). In spite of--or is it because of?--the hallucinatory succession of images which transform the world, the depiction of Woman reinforces certain thoroughly entrenched social myths. She is both real and ideal, a mediatrix between bourgeois sexual norms and the expression of desire.[12]

Many of the same points are made in Breton's Nadja, first published in 1928, but it must be made clear at the outset that the leader of the Surrealists preferred the intimacy of a unique loved one to the commodification of the brothel.[13] What the two books do have in common is the aggravated expectation of control over the world through the exercise of free imaginative life, a feeling which Aragon had represented as like that of "conquest, our minds intoxicated with their own receptiveness" (p. 168). Breton's book seems to place the onus of receptivity on the reader, for it replaces the lengthy descriptions of Paysan de Paris with banal photographs of the various sites passed by the poet as he "lived" the story in 1926. Still, Breton has contrived the city itself as a vast repository of potential discoveries through his own receptivity, coloured of course by expectations formed over years of non-institutional learning. The poet brings this about very economically by editing his real experiences in such a way that those which can easily have meaning beyond themselves--that is, which can function as a sign, like parapraxis--are severed from those which are, uninterestingly, only themselves. The Saint-Ouen flea-market on the northern edge of the city sets the stage, itself a perfect model of the chance encounter. The author does not tell us what he had for lunch, for instance, but he does recount an accidental meeting with a woman who has just read Aragon's Paysan. This in turn confirms his interest in objects of multiple significance: he recalls an incident in which Aragon showed him street signs that read differently from different points of view.

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[12] Rose M. Avila, "The Function of Surrealistic Myths in Louis Aragon's Paysan de Paris," French Forum, III, no. 3 (September 1978), p. 237.

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[13] Sylvia Kantarizis, "Surrealism, Communism, and Love," Essays in French Literature, no. 7 (November 1970), pp. 7-8.

Maison rouge, for example, seems to say police. He is then led to think of some trick pictures which depict different things when viewed obliquely, the so-called tableaux changeants.[14] One of the things that we deduce from this chain of events is that plurisignification follows the chance encounter, which, like the Freudian slip, articulates hidden motivations. For Breton, the hidden motivations revolve around the question "Who am I?" (p. 7), and the answer is a series of constantly changing symptoms.

Although Breton's picture of himself changes, depending upon the angle from which it is viewed, it is prepared by his receptivity to the unexpected marvel. It begins with his movement from masculinity to femininity, entirely conceived in terms of states of mind but presented as if embodied in experience itself. Setting out from the Hôtel des Grands Hommes in the Place du Panthéon, he is made anxiously receptive as he passes the statue of Etienne Dolet in the Place Maubert (p. 31). He then meets Nadja in the Place Dauphine on the Ile de la cité, itself a metropolitan icon of the eternal feminine, for the Place is a pubic triangle set into the tapered vaginal shape of the island itself (fig. 85).[15] The author's psychic passage from the masculinity of the rational to the femininity of receptiveness and the irrational is an equivalent of Aragon's labyrinth, both mental and metropolitan. Indeed, as Breton and Nadja sit in the Place Dauphine, the strange young woman alludes to a hidden tunnel beneath their feet. For both writers, then, access to the self is triggered by a woman.

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[14] André Breton, Nadja (Paris: Gallimard, 1928), pp. 67-8. Subsequent references will be retained in the text.

[15] Cf. the elementary symbolic shapes noted by Brassai, p. 7.

The very act of passing through the streets is sexual. The passages of Aragon are no less female than the Place Dauphine. They, too, sat on a triangular plot of land. Even the very word "passage" connoted female sexuality; before Freud, Voltaire had used it in precisely this way, and Breton implied the same in his frequent references to arcades and city gates.[16] Man Ray illustrated the association in his Les tours d'Eliane (the towers of Eliane, 1936; fig. 86), a drawing which reveals how shallow certain metaphoric practices can be. Passing through the portal of Woman, the Surrealist is transubstantiated and the world is aggressively revised.

To those who are prepared to receive it, Breton offers a new France, signalled in Nadja by including a photograph of the café La Nouvelle France (p. 82). Just around the corner, right on the edge of what used to be Aragon's passages, is another spot where he accidentally meets Nadja, this time wandering about with a copy of his 1924 anthology Les pas perdus, lost steps. The only pages she has read are those with accounts of chance encounters with women. In one of these, Breton had described a "veritable sphinx...in the guise of a charming woman...[questioning--or is it soliciting?] the passers-by" (pp. 101-2). Nadja, a genuinely disturbed mental patient, is thus fashioned into something else. When Breton had first met her near the Opéra, she was on her way to a hairdresser in the Boulevard Magenta (p. 79), a revelatory coincidence for the author when he later discovers there the Sphinx Hotel (p. 141). Like a sphinx, Nadja questions the nature of reality and man's role in it. However, Breton does not love her (pp. 200-1, note), so she only begins his process of transformation, like a philosopher's stone that catalyzes subsequent alchemical developments in later books.[17] It seems less and less a matter of chance that Nadja's name is "in Russian...the beginning of the word hope, and...only the beginning" (p. 84).[18]

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[16] For Voltaire, see Pierre Guirard, Le langage de la sexualité, I: Dictionnaire erotique (Paris: Payot, 1978), p. 480. For Breton, see Carrouges, Basic Concepts, passim. See especially the frequent references to the Porte Saint-Denis. Marcel Duchamp's connotation of the term, as exemplified by his Le passage de la vierge à la mariée (1912), is clearly related.

So it goes in Breton's new France, layers of coincidence generating layers of associations, on and on, spinning a complicated web of reality and imagination, allusion and illusion. Reality becomes representation, like a question turned to flesh, which is exactly why both Breton and Aragon sought a new sphinx. Moreover, both saw thought itself as a stream of images whose function was either symptomatic--to express hidden desires--or palliative--to relieve desire without eliminating it. It is this latter function that is structurally akin to pornography, one that is particularly unnerving because it has less to do with the overt victimization of women's images than it does with thought itself. But then, Breton's erotic had always to be veiled.

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[17] This theme is traced through Nadja, L'amour fou (1937), and Arcane 17 (1944) by Richard Danier, "André Breton et l'hermétisme alchimique," Question de, no. 15 (November-December 1976), pp. 47-57.

[18] Transliterated from Cyrillic script, the Russian words for hope are the feminine noun nadezhda and the imperfect verb nadeyat'sya.

The subversion of reality is effected by the narcotic or convulsive image, but the Surrealist image is not a fixed thing so much as it is the continuous exchange of thoughts and the evidence of the senses. Nadja herself asserted as much, without realizing it, when she likened a fountain in the Tuileries Gardens to thoughts--those of the madwoman _and_ those of the receptive Surrealist--always flowing, always changing, yet somehow always the same (pp. 115-16). Her observation afforded Breton the opportunity to make an allusion to George Berkeley's third _Dialogue between Hylas and Philonous_ of 1713, shrewdly omitting that portion of the title making it clear that Berkeley was in opposition to skeptics and atheists. The last sentences of the _Dialogue_ compare thought to the water of a fountain, rising toward skepticism but falling toward common sense.[19] The image was intended to express Berkeley's doctrine of Immaterialism, that appearances are not mere physical fronts for transcendant ideal forms. To that objective idealism, Berkeley opposed a subjective idealism, a fusion of appearances and ever-flowing thought--a religious prototype, so to speak, of irreligious Surrealism.

One of the collages from Ernst's La Femme 100 Têtes emblematizes the preoccupations discussed above and more besides. Entitled "Quietude" (fig. 87), it reflects those themes in a somewhat artificial way, admittedly, but it should be seized with all the more rigour because of it. Certainly, as should now be apparent, the Surrealists themselves did not disdain such ruses. The sleeping man recalls the narcotic of the unconscious image, while his reclining position suggests the receptive state of mind. His immersion in the sea evokes a Surrealist sense of dislocation, like the aquarium-world of Aragon's passages (p. 28) and the immense, unknown labyrinth beneath Breton's Place Dauphine. The arm below the chair indicates that Woman, less a participant than a trigger for the male, is at home in this mysterious element. The periscope allows her a role as either a prostitute with a provocative glance or a seer of occult marvels (or both), but it also keeps her from breaking the surface and becoming a conscious, cultural being. The building on the promontory suggests Aragon's erotic temple and the baths that might be had there; moreover, because André Masson also exploited the motif, linking it to the nature of thought (fig. 32; p. 151) we are not surprised that the water spout which surrounds the temple is a metaphor of thought for Breton. We might conclude this inventory with an aggressively abrupt over-simplification: Surrealist thought is an irreligious subjective idealism which, like the spout in "Quietude," puns on sexual release, a literal wet dream, even as the promontory within it ensures continual arousal.

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[19] George Berkeley, Three Dialogues between Hylas and Philonous (1713), in The Works of George Berkeley, D.D., Bishop of Cloyne (London: Tegg and Son, 1837), p. 82.

Both Aragon and Breton insisted that "life needs to be deciphered like a cryptogram."[20] This is the nature of thought, in its pristine state, presumably; but whenever this thought touches Woman, strange equations result: "The woman larger than life," wrote Aragon, "is growing still larger. Now the world is her portrait" (p. 208). Unfortunately, the other side of the equation displays an imbalance which overthrows any notion of equilibrium: "[The world's] necessity originates in me....Nature is my unconscious" (p. 151). There is no equivalence of the sexes; there is only the Woman who originates in the Surrealist. Sexual relations are reduced to a simple projection of the adolescent phallic idolatry that may have served a psychological or religious purpose at one time, but which has since become a weapon of patriarchal authoritarianism.[21] This, more than any other single thing, compromises Surrealist fashion. Aragon put it succinctly, as uttered by a suddenly animate statue:

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[20] Nadja, p. 150. Aragon's reference is more oblique; he described himself and his friends as "modern Champollions" (p. 201). This is an allusion to Jean-François Champollion (1730-1832), the Egyptologist who deciphered the hieroglyphics on the famed Rosetta Stone.

> 'with our polished members we help to set into motion the sluggish imagination of the timid girls who excite themselves in the strange shadow of our forms, in love henceforth with our superhuman bodies and nothing else (p. 189).[22]

One of the most pervasive of the current intellectual fashions concerns the writings of Jacques Lacan, a psychiatrist whose theories of the phallus as a "privileged signifier" have had as much or more impact on literary theory as they have had on psychology.[23] Given that Lacan published short essays in Minotaure and that he had exchanged ideas with Salvador Dalí and the writer René

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[21] See Elizabeth Farians, "Phallic Worship: The Ultimate Idolatry," in J. Plaskow and J. A. Romero, eds., Women and Religion: Papers of the Working Group on Women and Religion, 1972-3 (Missouli, Montana: Scholar's Press, 1974), pp. 77-91.

[22] The feminist viewpoint is clear, then, with regard to Aragon. For a related interpretation of Breton's book, see Gloria Feman Orenstein, "Nadja Revisited: A Feminist Approach," Dada/Surrealism, no. 8 (1978), pp. 91-106.

[23] A useful introduction is J. P. Muller and W. J. Richardson, "The Signification of the Phallus," in their Lacan and Language: A Reader's Guide to the Ecrits (New York: International Universities Press, 1982), pp. 332-354.

Crevel,[24] it might be thought that his linguistic conception of the phallus determined that of the Surrealists. The conclusion would be that the imposition of a phallus onto a woman's form was intended to expose the variability of signifiers themselves, in turn revealing the arbitrary and fictional nature of sexual identities in western culture.[25] It now appears, however, that this would be to twist the evidence in order to favour one of our own intellectual fashions--the body of structuralist and post-structuralist meditations that, despite the undeniable brilliance of its appropriations from linguistics, philosophy and science, reaches conclusions which are anchored in aesthetics. For example, the two most frequently repeated Lacanian concepts are those which develop Freudian condensation and displacement into metaphor and metonymy, basic tropes in which words are poetically diverted from their standard meanings; moreover, even the more obscure Lacanian concepts are used in discussions of essentially artistic manipulations of forms.[26] This process, of course, fetishizes aesthetics to an even greater degree than formalist analysis.[27] Lacan himself went the other way, seeking to demonstrate how nominally aesthetic methodologies inform psychic life, as in the case of a child who gradually shifts from a prelinguistic understanding of the world to a more developed understanding of self and others as potentially symbolic entities. This shift was, for Lacan, the new Oedipus complex, and the crisis it entailed was not castration anxiety but the identification of the structure of the personality with the structure of language.[28] In this, he was influenced by Surrealism, one of the goals of which was, in Breton's words, to "live out the most beautiful poem in the world," a sentiment echoed even by those who differed from Breton in other important respects. Still, the elements of the poem to be lived out were always carriers of certain vestigial connotations and associations --a narrow range of arbitrary determining factors which of necessity undermined the complete freedom which the

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[24] Jacques Lacan, "Le problème du style et la conception psychiatrique des formes paranoiaques de l'experience," Minotaure, no. 1 (February 1933), pp. 68-9; "Motifs du crime paranoïaque," Minotaure, no. 3-4 (14 December 1933), pp. 25-8. These two essays, as well as his book De la psychose paranoïaque dans ses rapports avec la personnalité (1932) have certain points in common with Dalí's paranoiac-criticism. Certainly the men knew each other, for Dalí's La vie secrète, pp. 33-5, describes the psychiatrist's first visit to the artist. Lacan, it seems, was influenced by Dalí. René Crevel's "Notes en vue d'une psycho-dialectique," Le Surréalisme au service de la révolution, no. 5 (15 May 1933), pp. 48-52, was directly inspired by Lacan's De la psychose.

[25] Juliet Mitchell and Jacqueline Rose, Feminine Sexuality: Jacques Lacan and the "Ecole freudienne", trans. J. Rose (London: Macmillan, 1982), pp. 137-48.

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[26] Malcolm Bowie, "Jacques Lacan," in J. Sturrock, ed., Structuralism and Since: From Lévi-Strauss to Derrida (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), p. 130; Krauss, "Corpus delecti," p. 78.

[27] Fredric Jameson, "Imaginary and Symbolic in Lacan: Marxism, Psychoanalytic Criticism, and the Problem of the Subject," Yale French Studies, no. 55-6 (1977), p. 392.

[28] Jacques Lacan, "The Insistence of the Letter in the Unconscious," in J. Ehrmann, ed., Structuralism (New York: Doubleday, 1970), pp. 101-137.

Surrealists sought. Harold Bloom's "anxiety of influence," with its ceaseless exchange of control and resistance, appropriation and misreading (see Chapter I, pp. 73-5), is really much closer to the character of the Surrealist context than Lacan's later concerns.[29] The Surrealist phallus is therefore neither a mere privileged signifier nor an actual pathological symptom. It is a cultural construct, adhered to in defiance of unthinking contemporary norms--despite certain underlying commonalities--in order to impart specialized, separate status.

We must not remain content, then, to dismiss Surrealism as an illness, nor can we lionize its proponents as profound philosophers of the semantic psyche, so to speak. We must see them as heirs to pervasive sexual attitudes of the nineteenth century and as practitioners of an amalgamative way of life which did not consider one of its principle targets, Woman, to be an autonomous, sentient being. There are two ways of looking at this: the first is to note that the nineteenth century's model of sexuality was mechanistic, a hydraulic system in which limited energy was gradually built up and suddenly released.[30] It requires no great leap of the imagination to see that a machine would make a wonderful phallus, for it can always be revived, an omnipresent potential, even when the flesh is weak. Michel Leiris went so far as to claim that his mother's pet name for his genitals was "little machine."[31] However, the second viewpoint is ultimately of greater significance, for it intimates that Surrealists were indifferent to the psychology of women as a matter of policy.

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[29] Lacan's Ecrits (Paris: Seuil, 1966) is full of references to Surrealism, so it is clear that the movement occupied a place between Freud and Lacan, both chronologically and intellectually.

[30] Martha Vicinus, "Sexuality and Power: A Review of Current Works in the History of Sexuality," Feminist Studies, VIII, no. 1 (Spring 1982), p. 136.

Immanuel Kant once wrote that "Woman does not betray her secret." He seems to have meant simply that no man fully understood the mind of a woman--at least, that is the meaning that Otto Weininger gave the phrase when he quoted it at the beginning of a section on "Male and Female Sexuality" in his 1903 study Geschlecht und Charakter.[32] Weininger had the intention of defining the female character once and for all, and throughout the book one finds innumerable comments which can be understood from our perspective as deeply misogynistic: women are soulless, women are devoid of genius, women are the enemies of their own emancipation, and so on. When the Austrian psychologist finally did pin Woman down, he did no more than expand upon the two most common nineteenth century stereotypes of Courtesan and Mother. Worse yet was his scientific attribution to women of the same sort of phallic adoration that Aragon saw: not only does Woman desire the phallus, it is this very aspect of man's sexual becoming that calls Woman into existence (p. 259). Moreover, the prostitute element within women prevents their emancipation, for their bondage lies "in the sovereign, all-too-welcome power wielded on them by the phallus" (p. 300). Of course, Freud later developed this idea into the penis envy that motivated women into coupling with men, and he placed the whole process under the rubric of Plato's androgyny.[33]

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[31] Manhood, p. 13. See also Chapter III, p. 236 and note 131.

[32] Otto Weininger, Geschlecht and Charakter: Eine prinzipielle Untersuchung (1903) (Vienna and Leipzig: Braumüller, 1926), p. 69. Subsequent references are retained in the text.

The more mythical concerns of the Surrealists led them to examine androgyny from a slightly different point of view, but the phallus was still the veiled motivating factor. In any case, the point to note is that the Surrealists were content to leave it at that, not caring to delve any further into the psyche of Woman. Max Ernst, for example, was said to have read Weininger when a young man, and he did not hesitate to repeat permutations of Kant's phrase in the last chapter of his La Femme 100 Têtes.[34] Like Weininger, who had defined hysteria as "the organic mendacity of women" (pp. 230-1), Ernst felt that Woman's secret was a primary, biological lie, as it were: the sexual freedom of her Courtesan (or hysteric) element functioned as a deception, a lure to ensure its opposite, motherhood. He demonstrated this in at least two plates, both of which are entitled "The eye without eyes, la femme 100 têtes keeps her secret." In the first of these (fig. 88), a woman wraps her arms around a boy, placing her right hand where his joins that of an adult male. It is probable that Ernst was playing with a father-son relationship here; Charlotte Stokes has shown that the origin of the two male figures was an illustration of a teacher of the deaf helping a student feel the effects of speech sounds, and Ernst's own father was just such a teacher.[35] An Oedipal relationship is established, then, and the confirmation is the left hand of the woman, which closes the father's eye. She does this not merely to keep her secret, but also because the putting out of male eyes, as in the story of Oedipus himself, is a standard symbol of castration anxiety. In spite of this, Stokes sees the whole image as a nativity scene, partly due to the attendant ass and the paradisiac landscape.

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[33] Beyond the Pleasure Principle (1920), S.E., XVIII, p. 58.

[34] Kant's phrase was "Die Frau verrät ihr Geheimnis nicht." Ernst varied it over seven plates. Originally captioned in French, the collage-novel was translated into German in 1962, by which time the permutations had become based on "hütet ihr Geheimnis." In other words, "does not betray her secret" was modified to "keeps her secret." Patrick Waldberg asserted that Ernst read Weininger in his Max Ernst (Paris: Pauvert, 1958), p. 58.

Now, Stokes has herself pointed out that the ass is really a prehistoric form of horse, which forces a revised interpretation with less internal contradiction. The scene is the primal wilderness, before the deleterious effects of civilization begin. Given the Surrealists' chronological primitivism, we can understand that this is not a mere wasteland but a metaphor of the perfect mental state. Its ephemeral nature is perfectly signalled by the arch of a rainbow. Although two male figures are seen, therefore, only one male mental state is represented--that of the same prelogical child that Maldoror urged to stay asleep. Woman's relationship to man is that of mother to the child, restraining him in a primeval, androgynous paradise of sexual ignorance. The gesture of her left hand thus means the same thing whether one reads it as castration or simply as sleep-induction.[36]

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[35] Stokes, "La Femme 100 Têtes by Max Ernst," pp. 310-13.

The second plate (fig. 89) follows the first with much intervening material between them, but despite this it seems to be the opposite side of the same coin. The primitive horse is now a more advanced animal, closer to the modern wild horse--the withers, for example, are more clearly articulated. The landscape has become an elaborate, incomplete architectural cage, a distinct sign of the encroachment of civilization. The male figures have been replaced by what appears to be an incomplete stone figurine with its arms crossed on the left side. Like Aragon's speaking statue, this one is a barely disguised phallus which has excited the woman who caresses it. The result of her excitation is the large, open eye coincident with her swollen belly, the evil eye of her impregnated womb. Through civilization and the awakening of sexual difference, she becomes a Weiningerian Mother even as her Courtesan spirit frolics nearby. As is clear in the succeeding plates, her triumph entails the torture of male figures--an abuse which is only reversed when Ernst turns to the Black Mass in the plate entitled "Rome" (see Chapter II, fig. 25). This enables the male protagonist to disassemble the universe at the end of the chapter, which he must do to prevent Woman from devoting herself solely to begetting, as Weininger put it (p. 88), or from having a "rapport with the phantom of repopulation," as Ernst put it. Interestingly, the latter phrase appears, quite isolated, immediately before the last chapter of the collage-novel. It is followed by an invocation of Satan.

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[36] Some illustrations of hysterics that Ernst may have known include the induction of hypnotic catalepsy through eye-touching. See Veith, fig. 12.

Ernst's two plates point to a very odd conclusion that seems true of Surrealists in general: they sought in the Courtesan the image of their own protective mothers, with whom they were ever happy, even as they were repelled by the spectre of their lovers becoming competitive Weiningerian Mothers. It is no wonder that they turned to a deeply veiled pornographic model, for it provided an infantile world filled by an immature mind.[37] On a purely psychological plane, it is impossible to accept that the Surrealists disdained children because they would lose the affection of their spouses. Breton, for instance, loved his daughter Aube as dearly as any father ever has.[38] But the point is not to search for diagnostic truth. It is to expose the attractive sociocultural escapism of those disinclined to engage the world as it is. Evidently, there is more than meets the eye in the strangely isolated breast and split belly of the women in Ernst's Il ne faut pas voir la réalité telle que je suis (Reality must not be seen as I am, 1923; fig. 90). In any case, Ernst certainly took his cultural conditioning as gospel, believing that motherhood was the be-all and end-all of sexual activity for women of bourgeois backgrounds. When he was preparing to leave his first wife, Louise Strauss, he exclaimed:

> You don't have any need for a husband anymore. You are twenty-eight years old. You know all about love; you have a son.... What more do you want?

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[37] Cf. Gubar, pp. 725-6. The Surrealists could not have foreseen the current pornographic obsession with external ejaculation, but the result is the same: no pregnancy. Guy Rosolato has argued that mothers and art (pornographic or not) are structurally identical fetishes of the paranoid personality. See his Essais sur le symbolique (Paris: Gallimard, 1969), pp. 237-8.

[38] This is abundantly clear from Breton's own writings, especially the last few pages of L'Amour fou, pp. 165-76. Here, he confesses that he once thought "the height of folly was to give life," but the perpetual smile of his eight-month-old girl changed his mind.

He later told that very son that "Love can be the worst venereal disease of all."[39] Without question, Ernst had no desire to understand Woman's point of view in all this. For him, Woman still kept her secret.

Perhaps it is purely coincidence that in 1924--the very year in which La Révolution Surréaliste most avidly sought new "members"--the Parisian Bibliothèque des curieux reprinted a study of 1825 by J.-A. Dulaire entitled Des divinités génératrices ou du culte du phallus.[40]

b) "A Ribbon Around A Bomb"

In her inventorial survey of Women Artists and the Surrealist Movement, Whitney Chadwick notes time and again that "almost without exception, women artists viewed themselves as having functioned independently of... Surrealist doctrine."[41] In other words, they refused to be "members," which is just as well, considering the picture that has been painted thus far. Despite a rapidly growing body of research on these women artists, however, a number fundamental questions must be asked. The answers to many of them must be provisional in this context, for extensive analysis lies outside the scope of this study, as will become apparent.

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[39] Jimmy Ernst, pp. 12 and 91, respectively.

[40] I have found no proof that the Surrealists knew the work. Still, the phallus was definitely in the air at the time, to coin a rather grotesque phrase, and it has been found veiled behind the works of Apollinaire, de Chirico, and others whose influence on the Surrealists is indisputable. See, for example, Bohn, pp. 153-65. Masson, Mémoire, pp. 23-4, shows the artist's familiarity with various stories concerning Priapus.

[41] P. 11. Subsequent references will be retained in the text.

First of all, it should be made quite clear that male Surrealists were almost totally indifferent to the work of women artists as art, even though they exhibited alongside them from time to time. Only one of the male artists whose writings have been mentioned thus far made more than a passing reference to a female *oeuvre*: Dalí scathingly condemned the work of Françoise Gilot (chapter III, note 52). Otherwise, individual women were mentioned chiefly as the wife or companion of a respected male. This lamentable situation is equally true of the male poets; most of the writers saw fit only to allude briefly to women while discussing other, more important, issues. One looks in vain through the writings of Aragon, Desnos, and Soupault, for example, for the same intensive level of discussion that is revealed in the dozens of pages on Ernst or de Chirico.[42] Eluard was a bit of an exception because he was a regular collaborator with Valentine Hugo, at least insofar as he had her illustrate his works--usually previously published ones, at that.[43] Breton, too, must be set a little to one side because of the notes on female artists in his Le surréalisme et la peinture. However, it must not be forgotten that what he wrote there is of extraordinarily little value as an appraisal of their production. Instead, we find poetically effusive meditations: Mimi Parent, for instance, is commemorated only with "In Mimi's thistled eyes shine the gardens of Armide [a celebrated enchantress] at midnight." When a woman's paintings are mentioned, they are never treated with the same perspicuity as those of a man. For example, the art of Frida Kahlo, whose likeness to a sort of seductive butterfly was Breton's primary concern, is summarized quickly as "a ribbon around a bomb."[44]

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[42] Louis Aragon, *Ecrits sur l'art moderne*, [ed., J. Ristat?] (Paris: Flammarion, 1981); Robert Desnos, *Ecrits sur les peintres* (Paris: Flammarion, 1984); Philippe Soupault, *Ecrits sur la peinture* (Paris: Lachenal and Ritter, 1980).

It is a sad fact that a great many of the women who participated in Surrealist exhibitions were there precisely because they, too, were nicely packaged explosives. Presumably, this is why Breton had difficulty believing that

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[43] Jean-Charles Gateau, Paul Eluard et la peinture surréaliste (1910-1939) (Geneva: Droz, 1982), pp. 307-15. Chadwick, Women Artists, p. 224, is almost a word-for-word translation of Paul Eluard et ses amis peintres, 1895-1952 (Paris: Centre culturel Georges Pompidou, Bibliothèque publique d'information/Musée national d'art moderne, 4 November 1982-17 January 1983), pp. 126-7. The source is not noted.

[44] Breton, Le surréalisme et la peinture, pp. 391 and 144, respectively. Curiously, Parent is not mentioned in Chadwick, Women Artists, nor are almost two dozen other women who have equal claim to be included in a book purporting to deal with female artists associated with Surrealism, whether they accepted or rejected the label of "Surrealist" (p. 10). Fortunately, they are represented in La Femme surrealiste: Obliques, pp. 1-321.

Kay Sage's quasi-architectural visions were not painted by a man--they were insufficiently feminine (Chadwick, p. 60). Of course, this meant that women's works were included to exploit some residual shock, outside of the artists' intentions, like embodiments of Breton's convulsive beauty. Certainly, that was why Breton gave Meret Oppenheim's famous fur-covered cup, saucer, and spoon of 1936 the title Déjeuner en fourrure: where the artist wanted only to explore the implications of a conversation concerning decorative, if unusual, jewelry, the poet wanted to exploit the aura of scandalous female sexuality in Edouard Manet's celebrated painting Le déjeuner sur l'herbe (luncheon on the grass, 1863) and the blatant sexual fetishism of Leopold von Sacher-Masoch's Venus im Pelz (Venus in furs, 1870), known in France as Vénus en fourrures.[45]

Female artists, then, were treated with the same ambivalent mixture of curiosity and indifference that was directed towards the art of the insane. The men felt free to exploit madness for its expressive potential but paid little or no attention to specific madmen, who were not of the same status as themselves. Indeed, as J. H. Matthews has discovered, the very real mental disturbances of two women, Leonora Carrington and Unica Zürn, recorded painstakingly in later, more lucid times, were of interest neither as fodder for psychoanalysis nor as "the ultimate to which surrealist writing aspires."[46] In this, the Surrealists were not significantly different from the bourgeoisie; the New York critic Henry McBride, for instance, once noted that female artists made better Surrealists because seventy percent of the movement was comprised of hysterics anyway (Chadwick, p. 64). Even in relatively recent years, the quality of a woman artist's work has taken a back seat to her psychic state. In 1975, both Oppenheim and Leonor Fini were persistently described as sorceresses, which is, for a critic, much less a reclamation of hidden creative powers, as Chadwick puts it (pp. 181-2), than it is an attempt to force them into preconceived roles.[47] Only a year earlier, Dorothea Tanning could not have been more correct when she

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[45] The fur object is in the collection of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, where it is known only as Object. it is reproduced in Rubin, Dada and Surrealist Art, fig. 269, as Fur-covered Cup, Saucer, and Spoon. For the origins of the piece, see Nicolas Calas, "Meret Oppenheim: Confrontations," Artforum, XVI, no. 10 (Summer 1978), p. 24. Oppenheim confirmed Breton's "collaboration" in conversation, Paris, 7 November 1984.

> noted with a certain consternation that the place of woman among the Surrealists was not different from the one she

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[46] Matthews, Surrealism, Insanity, and Poetry, p. 6. Carrington's text was "Down Below," VVV, no. 4 (February 1944), later reprinted separately (Chicago: Black Swan Press, 1972). Zürn's account was L'homme-jasmin (Paris: Gallimard, 1971).

[47] G. Lascault, "Meret Oppenheim," XXe siècle, XXXVII, no. 45 (December 1975), pp. 148-9; Gustav R. Hocke, "Leonor Fini: Blumen preziöser Magie," in his Malerei der Gegenwart: der Neo-Manierismus, vom Surrealismus zur Meditation (Wiesbaden: Limes, 1975), pp. 67-74.

> occupies among the population in general, including the bourgeoisie.[48]

We can only conclude that the participation of living women in a movement which disdained them in favour of a number of abstractions is problematic in the extreme. Moreover, the accounts of the women themselves are often contradictory: for every Fini, who sought a degree of independence from her male associates, there was a Kay Sage, who thought it was natural that she took more interest in her husband Yves Tanguy's work than vice versa, or a Leonora Carrington, seated like a disciple at the feet of Max Ernst (Chadwick, pp. 81, 98, and 80, respectively). It has even been suggested that Fini's failure to attend Surrealist meetings was not defiance because Breton himself prevented it.[49] So why did women participate? The answer is quite unclear: on one side are the women who have freely admitted that it was only because of their attachments to men; on the other are those who participated because Surrealism itself had become a new cultural fashion. With this in mind, it is important to note that the vast majority of women appeared on the horizon just as Surrealism became increasingly preoccupied with advertising, haute couture, and jewelry (cf. Chadwick, pp. 55, 119, 122). That this is so has nothing whatsoever to do with the artists' integrity or with their femaleness; it shows only that the historical moment of major innovation had passed. Surrealism's basic tenets were thoroughly entrenched and its productions, most notably in the visual arts, were rapidly degenerating into easily consumable mannerisms. The great majority of the women artists were pressed into service as reinforcements, as it were. Many of them perpetuated some aspects of the negative iconography of Woman, perhaps unwittingly or in spite of attempts to subvert them. Ithell Colquhoun, Fini, Oppenheim, and Toyen, for instance, all made images that continued to exploit male castration anxiety and/or the femme fatale.[50] Some of those who chose not to draw directly from the stagnant pool of Surrealist ideas were nevertheless influenced by it, even if only through their relationships with men. The most productive periods of several women were precipitated by the loss of their painter-mates (Chadwick, pp. 84, 92, 102), which suggests such a high degree of dependence that it is no surprise their works became synonymous with self-exploration: they had nowhere else to look.

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[48] Tanning, "Souvenirs," Dorothea Tanning (Paris: Centre nationale d'art contemporaine, 28 May-8 July 1974), p. 49.

[49] Xavière Gauthier, Leonor Fini (Paris: Musée de poche, 1979), p. 122.

Perhaps the genuineness of the self-exploration can be used as a barometer of both the engulfment of women by Surrealism and their creative emancipation from it. But there are no clear lines to be drawn. Almost all of the women involved created works which can be interpreted either way, depending upon the optic with which they are viewed. A case in point is Carrington's Autoportrait: à l'auberge du cheval d'Aube (Self-portrait: at the inn of the dawn-horse, 1937-8; fig. 91), which Chadwick links to "childhood worlds of fantasy and magic...capable of creative transformation through mental rather than sexual power" (p. 79). Only the repudiation of the sexual redeems what is otherwise compromised by adherence to the male models of regression and metamorphosis, for there is nothing intrinsically good about the toys of childhood. Moreover, the toys provide a clear escape from the enclosing walls only by a transformation begun by a man: the white rocking horse comes alive in the window in the distance, giving a release which Carrington explicitly associated with the shamanistic activities of Max Ernst (Chadwick, p. 79). Without the intervention of the male element, the central figure would remain trapped, like the female arm and feet of the chair on which she sits, itself so reminiscent of contemporary fetishizing works by André Masson and Kurt Seligmann.[51] If Carrington was truly exploring herself in this work, then she seems to have concluded that she was genuinely creative, but chiefly because her ability to regress had been awakened by Ernst. One could say much the same thing of the ostensibly feminist reclamation of sorcery and the intuitive control of nature signalled by the figure's devil's-horned gesture and the mammiferous hyena it invokes. Gloria Feman Orenstein has argued that Carrington constantly liberated the fundamental animal nature of women as a metaphor of original feminine creativity, implying that such a regression was in fact a forward step towards freedom. On the other hand, Renée Hubert has proposed exactly the opposite--that the painting emblematizes female imprisonment.[52] What are we to make of this contradiction? Perhaps the real strength of the picture is in its fusion of biological creativity, represented by the hyena, and artistic creativity, represented by the sorceress-hysteric. Nevertheless, even if this is the picture's strength, then it is a force imparted by the corrupted vocabulary of male Surrealism: let us not forget that hysteria (of which sorcery was an early manifestation) was a supreme means of expression outside of the control of the hysteric herself. To sum up, then, the self-portrait can be understood as toeing the party line, so to speak, accepting the dependent role of the prelogical entity.[53] It does so, however, without the usual erotic overtones.

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[50] See Colquhoun's Pine Family (1941) and Fini's Chthonian Divinity Watching Over the Sleep of a Young Man (1947), reproduced in Chadwick, Women Artists, figs. 106, 107. An untitled and undated drawing by Oppenheim features a crucified penis; reproduced in La Femme surréaliste: Obliques, p. 192. Toyen's Dessin érotique (1936) is a drawing of a woman's gloved hands manipulating severed male genitals bleeding from the urethra; reproduced in Styrský, Toyen, Heisler (Paris: Centre Georges Pompidou, Musée nationale d'art moderne, 1982), p. 65.

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[51] See, for example, Masson's Le fauteuil Louis XVI (1938), reproduced in Otto Hahn, Masson, trans. R. E. Wolf (New York: Abrams, 1965), p. 47; and Seligmann's Ultra-meuble (1938), reproduced in Rubin, Dada and Surrealist Art, fig. 285.

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[52] Gloria Feman Orenstein, "La nature animale et divine de la femme dans les oeuvres de Leonora Carrington," *Mélusine*, no. 2 (1981), pp. 130-7; Renée Rièse Hubert, "Surrealist Women Painters, Feminist Portraits," *Dada/Surrealism*, no. 13 (1983), p. 80.

Many other women artists exploited the childhood metaphor, of course--one thinks especially of Dorothea Tanning's ostensibly autobiographical Children's Games of 1942, in which playtime amounts to a demolition and disordering of the world analogous to the Surrealist revolution.[54] Still, it would be quite incorrect to assume that there is no depiction of adult sexual experience in the work of women. Fini's graphic works include illustrations of a woman fondling a man's erect penis, oral sex, a man with an erection subduing a woman, and a host of other such things.[55] One of Valentine Hugo's illustrations for the Marquis de Sade's Eugénie de Franval (1948) is a fragment of an explicit copulation, with a female hand guiding a phallus into a vagina. Black and white stars twinkle around the lovers, suggesting that the cosmos unfolds during sex, yet another way to disorder the world.[56] It may be, however, that the sense of disarray is an illusion, for one often uncovers evocations of the same "natural order"--that is, female dependence and subordination--that marks the work of male artists. Hugo's untitled "object of symbolic function" (fig. 92)[57] is a thinly veiled allegory of the sexual chase: on a gaming board which clearly indicates chance and risk, Hugo placed two gloves, one of which penetrates the other by slipping a finger just under the cuff. Of course, it is the female that is penetrated: Hugo coded the sexes through colour--carnal red versus virginal white--and position--male convexity versus female concavity. Moreover, the female fingers hold a die which is not only another sign of chance but may also be a characteristic Surrealist pun. Man Ray's film of 1929 entitled Le Mystère du château de dés (the mystery of the chateau of dice) was inspired by a line of Stéphane Mallarmé's poetry: "un coup de dés n'abolira jamais le hasard" (a throw of the dice will never abolish chance).[58] Hugo's object may have been intended to play off the same phrase by roughly reversing coup de dé to dé à coudre, "thimble." The resonance of a thimble is once again sexual, involving penetrating fingers, an overtone of domestic subordination, and a fashionably Lautréamontesque allusion to a sewing-machine. And for those who miss the association, Hugo has literally pinned it down: red and white thumbtacks entrap the gloves in a net of sorts. But who can say if this was a condemnation or a desire, for once again, the work can be interpreted as autobiography: it was fabricated in the middle of a short period of eighteen months during which Hugo and Breton were extremely close. The artist loved the suitor of the *femme-enfant* to the point of distraction, but at forty-four years of age she was simply too old to divert him for long.[59] She was also too sophisticated, presumably, and too capable; unlike Tanning, she did not exploit the imagery of childhood in her art.

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[53] One wonders if the Aube of the title is just the metaphorical dawn or an allusion to André Breton's daughter, who would then have been between eight and twenty-four months old.

[54] Hubert, "Surrealist Women Painters," p. 76.

[55] Jean-Paul Guibbert, Leonor Fini, graphique, 2nd ed. (Lausanne: Clairefontaine, 1976), pp. 58, 15i, 107.

[56] An excellent reproduction is in Anne de Margerie, Valentine Hugo, 1887-1968, étude documentaire (Paris: Damase, 1983), p. 113.

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[57] Salvador Dalí included it with his discussion of other objects of symbolic function, linking them with sexual perversion: "Objets surréalistes," pp. 16-17.

[58] Penrose, p. 95. The poem is reprinted and discussed at great length in Robert Greer Cohn, Mallarmé's "Un Coup de Dés": an exegesis (New Haven: Yale, 1949).

There were other alternatives. Instead of regressive escapism or adult conformism, one could select the mythic origins of the world and the goddess that created them. There is no doubt that many of the women artists knew Robert Graves's *The White Goddess*, an attempt to retrieve matriarchal traditions from a vague past obscured by patriarchal suppression and out-and-out corruption. For example, Carrington certainly knew of the great goddess Danu (Chadwick, p. 198), whom Graves described as a Universal mother existing prior to the Judaeo-Christian Father.[60]

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[59] André Thirion, *Révolutionnaires sans révolution* (Paris: Laffont, 1972), pp. 322-3. Part of the Breton-Hugo correspondence (1930-1932) is conserved in the Fonds Doucet, Paris, but the conditions of Breton's bequest prohibit their publication.

[60] Robert Graves, *The White Goddess: A Historical Grammar of Poetic Myth* (New York: Creative Age Press, 1948), p. 47.

Greek myths deprived her of divinity and made her Danaë, the mortal who was impregnated by Zeus's shower of gold--a dim reflection of the earth-mother fructified by rain. Carrington's restoration of the goddess to her former omnipotent stature leads some to conclude that the artist was making feminist headway.[61] But what purpose is really served if one forgets that all such deities began as allegorizations or personifications of natural processes and rudimentary biology? Women's myths of Woman as nature, in other words, are as culturally determined as men's myths of Woman as nature.

The fundamental ambiguity of goddess-reclamation is reflected in the comments of the artists themselves. Carrington asserted in 1976:

> [Women's rights] must be Taken Back Again, including the mysteries which were ours and which were violated, stolen or destroyed....

Tanning, on the other hand, ridiculed the idea of women's mysteries like Mother Nature: "can't you see her, tentacles waving in the void, her body dragging its track of slime...."[62] Historians of art are equally divided:

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[61] Gloria Feman Orenstein, "Women of Surrealism," in Judy Loeb, ed., Feminist Collage: Educating Women in the Visual Arts (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1979), p. 44.

[62] Carrington, untitled statement, Leonora Carrington: A Retrospective Exhibition (New York: Center for Inter-American Relations, 1976), unpaginated; Tanning, "Dorothea Her Lights and Shadows [sic]," Dorothea Tanning (New York: Gimpel-Weitzenhoffer Gallery, 16 October-15 November 1979), unpaginated.

Estella Lauter has argued that a unique feminine reality is exposed through such salvage operations, whereas Linda Nochlin seems convinced that a return to the mythic nature-woman is the very antithesis of historical action.[63]

Regardless of the goddess, a concern primarily with the self links some of the women artists to the Surrealist movement as clearly as any individual motif or technical device. With the exceptions of Grace Pailthorpe, whose psychological concerns with genuine expression led her to describe male Surrealist art as unreliable (Chadwick, p. 222), and Lee Miller and Toyen, both of whom turned from themselves to comment on World War II (Chadwick, pp. 231-3), all the women can be described in the same terms of narcissism and abrogation of social responsibility that are applicable to the men. None of them, for example, appeared to have been involved with the women's movement until the 1970s, when it became yet another fashion to retrieve women artists. Only one of them, Eileen Agar, read the writings of Thomas Malthus (Chadwick, p. 130), whose economically and demographically-based principles of population control were imperative to the French feminists' demands for birth-control. It is not incidental that the artists themselves were quite at odds on the subject of motherhood; they all dealt with it as a personal issue, rather than a social one. Carrington and Miller both had children, but Agar, Fini, and Oppenheim were indifferent or actively opposed. Tanning depicted reproduction as violent and alienating in her Maternity (1946), while her Maternity II (1953) shows it as animalistic at best. Where the former painting reveals physical isolation and torn clothing, the latter has a wild-eyed, dishevelled woman on all fours, surrounded by a litter of anthropoid pups reminiscent of her famous dog, Katchina.[64] In complete contrast, Kahlo's paintings on the subject are the most intensely moving of any produced by an artist even loosely affiliated with Surrealism; hers are genuine cries of psychological and physical distress, chiefly because of her damaged spine, her broken marriage, and her miscarriages. However, the very authenticity of her self- exploration marks her pictures as well beyond the artificial interlacings of Surrealism, despite their superficial likenesses.[65]

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[63] Estella Lauter, Women as Mythmakers: Poetry and Visual Art by Twentieth-Century Women (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1984), p. 20; Ann Sutherland Harris and Linda Nochlin, Women Artists, 1550-1950 (Los Angeles: Los Angeles County Museum, 21 December 1976-13 March 1977), p. 67 and note 243.

Kahlo's undeniable sincerity marked her as an artist of deeper importance than any other woman with links to Surrealism. Those others may have been more talented--Hugo's draughtsmanship is excellent, if a little mannered. Others were certainly more confrontational--Bona de

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[64] Reproduced in Alain Bosquet, Dorothea Tanning (Paris: Pauvert, 1966), pp. 34 and 72.

[65] Hayden Herrera, Frida: A Biography of Frida Kahlo (New York: Harper and Row, 1983), pp. 133-60, 258, and elsewhere.

Mandiargue's nipple-exposing evening dress is provocation through subordination _par excellence_.[66] But no-one was more brutally immediate and deeply personal while, paradoxically, seeming so universal. Because of this, Kahlo's work really should not be included here. Unfortunately, there is no way to assess the sincerity of the other women artists. Presumably, they all were true to themselves, but their adherence to Surrealist routine coloured their work. Even the characteristics of their written autobiographies reflect its inventiveness and allusiveness. Carrington's "Down Under" makes rich use of sometimes startling images; Zürn's _L'homme-jasmin_ was written in the third person, as were certain accounts by Ernst; and Tanning's recently released _Birthday_ twists her life energetically.[67] In defense of genuineness, it could be said that the frequently appearing motif of the spiritual quest (Chadwick, pp. 214, 218) indicates a heartfelt desire to find oneself without adherence to Freudian cliches, as well as to establish or to renew old metaphors of women's (non-reproductive) creativity. This means that certain notions of creativity, even talent, were approved by women, while spirituality was understood at face value, not as metaphor. Since such a defense would therefore reverse two basic Surrealist tenets--the repudiation of talent, authorial motivation, or creativity; and spirituality taken strictly as metaphor--it would appear that some women artists were not really Surrealists at all. Chadwick herself notes that it might be more profitable to adduce the terms Magic Realism and Neo-Romanticism (p. 220). Considering Fini's work, Marcel Brion has suggested "fantastic realism."[68] Whatever they are called, some of the works of the women artists with connections to Surrealism redefine it in such a way that they actually leave the movement's "pioneering exploration of creative waters" behind.[69] It is for this reason that we cannot follow them here.

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[66] Reproduced in _La Femme surréaliste: Obliques_, p. 72.

[67] Dorothea Tanning, _Birthday_ (Santa Monica: Lapis, 1986). See my forthcoming review in _Woman's Art Journal_ (1988).

Some will say that the brevity of our consideration of women artists gives them short shrift. This is true, but it is defensible on the grounds that we have concentrated on the construction of the ideology, which was entirely the contribution of male Surrealists. The women who merely subscribed to it deserve no more or less attention than any other third or fourth-generation Surrealists, who are also given short shrift. Those women who heroically rose above it are gradually being more profitably examined in contexts which correctly downplay or elide the Surrealist connections. In any case, the women's Woman was founded to a certain degree on the actual experience of womanhood, even when tinted by male preoccupations. In contrast, the men's Woman was fabricated from patriarchal habits of mind, sexual proclivities, and even unconscious political attitudes. With the last point in mind, it is interesting to speculate why none of the Surrealists, male or female, were interested in the vote for women in the 1930s. The biggest fear of the French Senate was that women, statistically proven to attend church in larger numbers than men, would vote for the clerical parties, thereby threatening the security of the lay republic.[70] The church was anathema to the Surrealists as well. Breton, for one, even threatened his daughter with Mass as a form of punishment (Chadwick, p. 61). In failing to support universal suffrage vocally, the Surrealists were thus in step with the very bourgeoisie they had hoped to overthrow. It follows that the Surrealist Woman would have virtually no power of self-determination. Susanne Kappeler considers such an iconography of powerlessness to be a pornography of representation, by which she means not sex or morality, but a new perspective on the very function of representation itself in contemporary society:

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[68] Marcel Brion, Leonor Fini (Paris: Pauvert, 1955), unpaginated.

[69] With this final phrase, Chadwick, Women Artists, p. 237, leaves the reader with the impression that Surrealism was a harmless investigation of aesthetic originality and productivity. This is precisely the impression that we are here trying to avoid.

> We have a cultural discourse that is monologic, a self-representation of a dominant group, and a distribution of

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[70] Theodore Zeldin, France, 1848-1945, I: Ambition, Love, and Politics (Oxford: Clarendon, 1973), p. 360.

> roles that reflects the inequality of
> the subject and the object.[71]

As much could be said of Surrealism. The women who did speak up during that particular monologue were drowned out by male voices because their historical moment--which was not that of political representation but of insights and values--had not yet come.

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[71] Susanne Kappeler, The Pornography of Representation (Cambridge: Polity, 1986), p. 215.

Conclusion

In 1985, Peter Webb offered the first comprehensive appraisal of Hans Bellmer in English:

> Far from being an outsider, Bellmer was in the mainstream of modernism.... Like the surrealist artists, he set himself the task of visually communicating truths about our psychic life.... Bellmer was a participant in that radical revision of identity that we associate with the modernist temper.[1]

Such an assessment clearly exalts Bellmer, Surrealism, and modernism in general. It perpetuates distinctions between high art or erotica and low art or pornography, in spite of the unadulterated appropriation of pornographic motifs in Bellmer's *oeuvre*. In one example, Bellmer copied a Victorian photograph of explicit fellation, placing himself at the centre of the activity.[2] Given that the result differs very little from Max Ernst's "Cézanne and Rosa Bonheur" (fig. 46; pp. 213-14), which also links artistic and sexual manipulation, we are not surprised that from our viewpoint the image and the pseudo-alchemical methods used to create it smack of the ideology of sexual subordination. Webb, however, defends the artist's imagery and procedures as an intellectual eroticism opposed to the mere sexual incitement of pornography.[3] Of course, this is a widespread attitude which justifies erotica as an art of high moral or aesthetic seriousness, vastly superior to the banality of popular culture.

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[1] Peter Webb and Robert Short, *Hans Bellmer* (London: Quartet, 1985), pp. 269-70.

[2] Ibid., p. 243, figs. 277-8. Other examples are figs. 108, 256, 258.

Modernism, too, is thought by some to be superior to lower forms of culture, offering opposition or alternatives to it. But it is becoming ever more apparent that neither erotica nor modernism are magically independent of the horizon of expectations of the artists and their public. The horizon, of course, was substantially informed by deeply veiled, often quite unconscious, political motivations which subsumed aesthetics and morality. Thanks to this realization, a new generation of critics is re-examining received opinions concerning erotica, modernism, and the relations between the two. For instance, Susanne Kappeler has challenged the moral basis of discussions of pornography by insisting that morality corresponds only to "porno," leaving "graphy" unattended. To redress the imbalance, she shifts her discussion to call into question the very functions of representation in society.[4] Mary Ann Caws and Craig Owens, in their separate ways, extend the critique by asking such questions as who represents, what is represented, what represents, what is the function of looking at representations, and so on.[5]

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[3] Ibid., p. 237.

[4] Kappeler, pp. 2-3 and passim.

One of the consequences of such analyses is the sudden collapse of widely-held distinctions between high art--whether erotica or modernism--and bourgeois culture. Susan Gubar expands on this aspect, declaring that the dissimilarities between art and pornography are ultimately fictitious and that the only apparent differences are the ways in which the works are received: those who stress potential effects on recipients see only pornography, while those who exalt authorial motivations or aesthetic strategies see art.[6] For her part, Carol Duncan has shown that the theoretical preoccupations and stylistic innovations that characterized modernism were largely functions of patriarchal social codes like male potency and domination:

> Extreme reductions and distortions of form and color, all highly deliberated, self-evident "aesthetic" choices, transpose the sexual conflict onto the "higher" plane of art. Again, the assertion of virility becomes sublimated,

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[5] Caws, pp. 262-87; Craig Owens, "The Discourse of Others: Feminists and Postmodernism," in Hal Foster, ed., The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture (Port Townsend, Washington: Bay, 1983), pp. 57-82.

[6] Gubar, pp. 717, 723-4.

> metamorphosed into a demonstration of
> artistic control....[7]

None of these writers discuss Bellmer, but they cast an unfavourable light on his work and its interpretation by Webb. The key word is still control.

Webb's appraisal of Bellmer may be taken as a paradigm of much literature on Surrealism in general. Only a small percentage of recent works challenge the special status of modernist artists and re-examine the putative links between psychic truth and the formation of identity. By tracing a tortuous path through Surrealism's appropriations from psychology, the occult, and the literary world, this study has attempted to contribute to an ongoing re-evaluation by asserting that the artists' identitites and their imaginative projections of the image of Woman were never autonomous psychic truths operating independently of either quotidian culture or a separatist intellectual climate. Moreover, it asserts that "psychic truth" is itself a fiction, a cultural construct which in no way validates the expressions it engenders. Certainly Surrealism can be understood as an alternative to aesthetic modernism, but it is no less a metaphor of control and representation. It is, therefore, a special case of modernism, revealing that modernism and its attendant myths are inherently patriarchal.

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[7] Duncan, p. 301. See also chapter III, note 48.

Like the Baudelairean flâneur, the modernist artist is free to look anywhere. Femaleness and the places in which it flourishes are either excluded altogether, objectified by the male gaze, or apotheosized by the idealizing self-interest of the strolling dandy. At this point, Woman becomes

> a divinity, a star, ...a kind of idol, stupid perhaps, but dazzling and bewitching, who holds wills and destinies suspended on her glance.[8]

To the Baudelairean glorification the Surrealists added their perceptions of the aggressive sexual orientation of the superior Woman, whom their forerunner Apollinaire had recognized in the Marquis de Sade's notorious dominatrix Juliette:

> a being...that breaks loose from humanity, that will have wings and will renew the universe.[9]

Given these predecessors, however, we can see that the Surrealist did not elevate and revere Woman in order to emancipate her. Breton may have written that "The time will come when the ideas of woman will be asserted at the expense of those of man," but he did so only because Woman had

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[8] Baudelaire, The Painter of Modern Life, p. 30. Importantly, this is the same text in which the word "modernity" was first used.

[9] Guillaume Apollinaire, "Preface" to D.A.F. de Sade's "Histoire de Juliette," Oeuvres complètes du Marquis de Sade (Paris: Pauvert, 1968), vol. 19, p. xxiii.

"powers to exalt" which man had to "jealously appropriate to himself."[10] The only female power which was beyond man's grasp--that is, which necessitated the continued presence of Woman--was her ability to become a transcendant Madonna of sorts. Of course, this was not really a female power at all, but a patriarchal prestidigitation designed by men to satisfy themselves: one could play at pseudo-psychology and say that Woman's destiny was to replace the Surrealist's biological mother, endlessly re-enacting his childhood memories or their symbolic equivalents, preserving and palliating an infantile phallic adoration. But to do this would be to ignore that the Surrealists' mental habits were cultural, not psychological, in origin. For those Surrealists who chose to advance a few steps up the developmental ladder into adolescence, the preferred Woman actualized the sexual servitude of the contemporary lover and/or prostitute, whose ministrations alleviated desire without surpassing the model of a nurturing mother satisfying her child's every whim. Regardless of her elevation, then, Woman played a subservient role in the wish-fulfillment _qua_ revolution of Surrealism, which favoured regressive, imaginative projections over real political engagement, despite its numerous collective tracts, flirtations with party politics, and other assertions to the contrary.[11] It is no wonder that the

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[10] André Breton, _Arcane 17_ (New York: Brentano's, 1945), pp. 89-90.

[11] See José Pierre, _Position politique de la peinture surréaliste_ (Paris: Museé de poche, 1975), for a summary analysis.

Madonna thus had no political identity. Kappeler's words, though they do not allude to Surrealism, seem oddly appropriate here:

> Ultimate Madonna status is achieved in selflessness, where the woman has graduated to angel and ceases to be part of the human condition.[12]

As a unique manifestation within the great stretch of modernism from Baudelaire forward, Surrealism rendered Woman doubly marginal--excluded, confined, and defined first by popular culture and second by its presumed antithesis.[13] Conceived of as "the actual functioning of thought,"[14] Surrealism led to sexual propositions of such social inequity that thought itself was compromised. It proudly proclaimed its indifference to the abstract, disinterested vehicle of reason, aimed at "the recognition of things and persons in their suchness, undistorted by our subjective interest in them"; it proferred instead an amalgamative world-view which can only be characterized as manipulative intelligence, "the capacity to use thinking [or its surrogates, like collage, automatism, the object] for manipulating the world outside for man's purposes."[15] The purposes were desire and control, coloured by years of uncritical manipulation of fashionable alternatives to bourgeois repression. In doing this, the Surrealist revolution succeeded in smashing many restrictive social codes, but the speed with which its practices were adopted by bourgeois consumer culture--also dedicated to desire and control and thoroughly pornographic in its ideology[16]--is indicative that the revolution was won by the political entities against whom it was originally directed. Throughout all of this, Woman was the recipient of the most manipulation. Despite the centrality of _Woman_ to the Surrealist project, _women's_ concerns were never given voice.

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[12] Kappeler, p. 218.

[13] Some of the notions put forward in these paragraphs were inspired by a conversation with Griselda Pollock (Kingston, November 1986), who is developing a related thesis for a forthcoming publication with Rozsika Parker.

[14] André Breton, "Manifesto of Surrealism," p. 26.

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[15] Fromm, p. 50. Note that Fromm is writing about Freud, not Surrealism.

[16] Cf. Lisa Steele, "A Capital Idea: Gendering in the Mass Media," in Varda Burstyn, ed., _Women Against Censorship_ (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 1985), pp. 58-78.

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The following is a list of cited works only. It is arranged in three parts: I. Writings by Surrealists and their circle; II. Writings on Surrealists; and III. Materials used by Surrealists. Unrelated materials used in the course of this investigation are not included. The first two sections are subdivided, with book-length studies preceding shorter works.

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ON THE IMAGE OF WOMAN IN SURREALIST ART

VOLUME TWO

ROBERT JAMES BELTON

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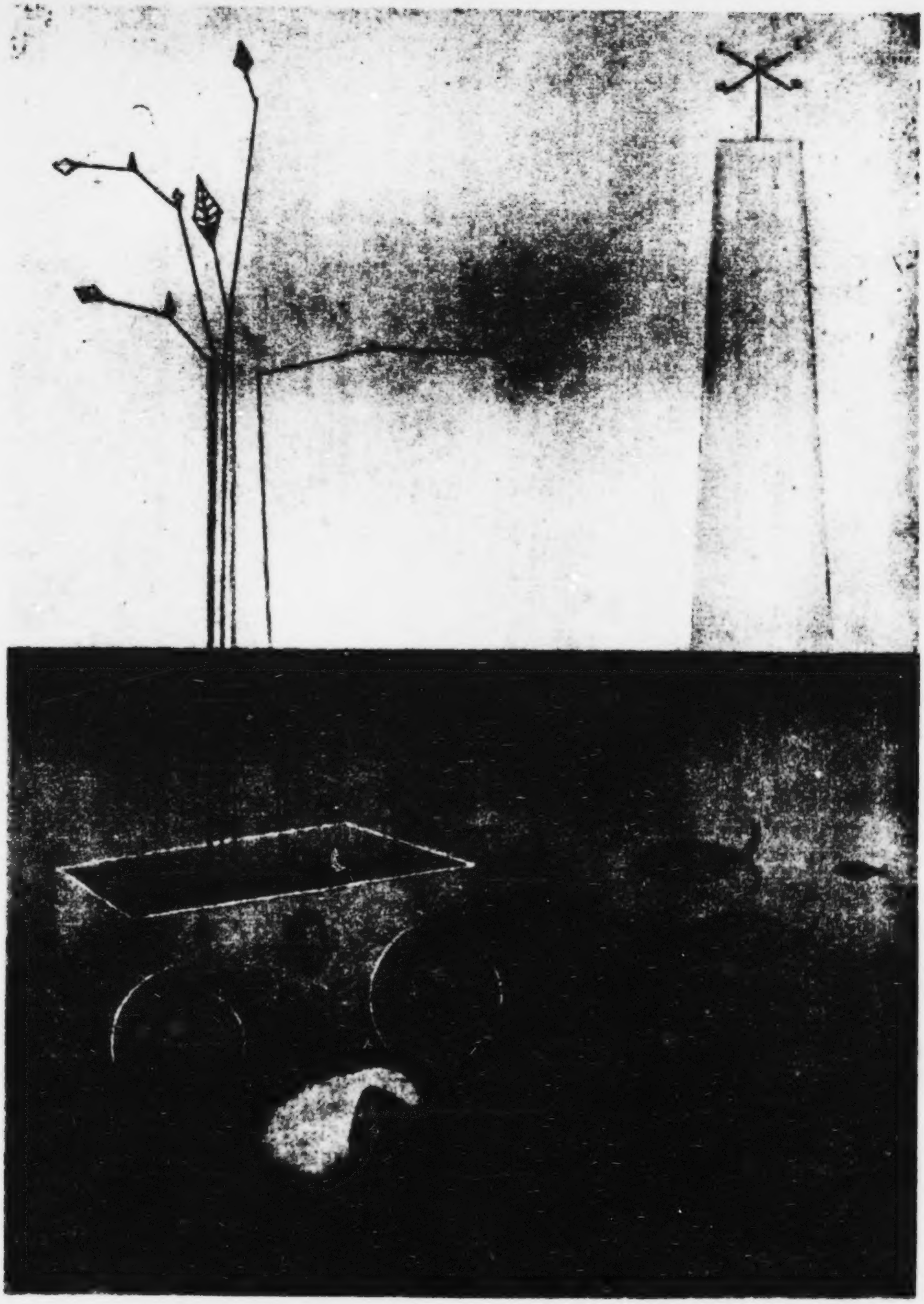
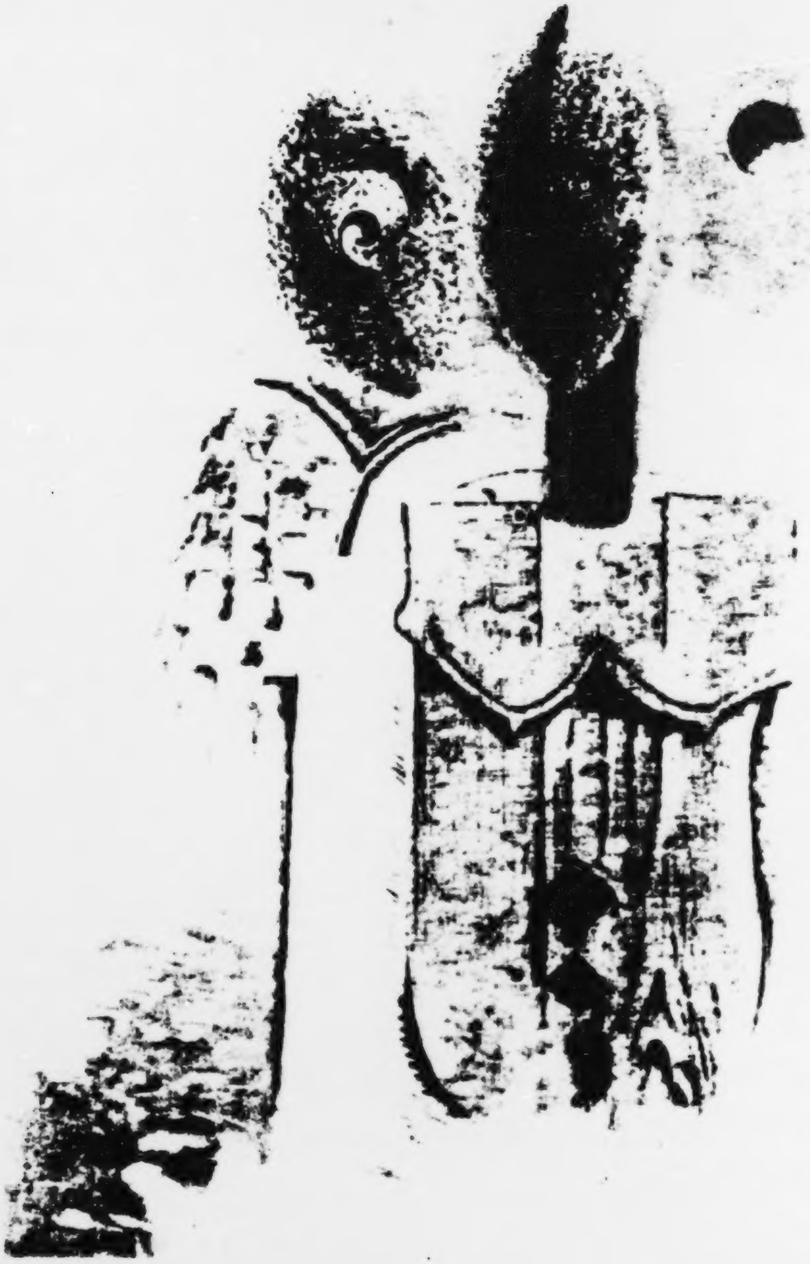


Fig. 1. Tanguy.



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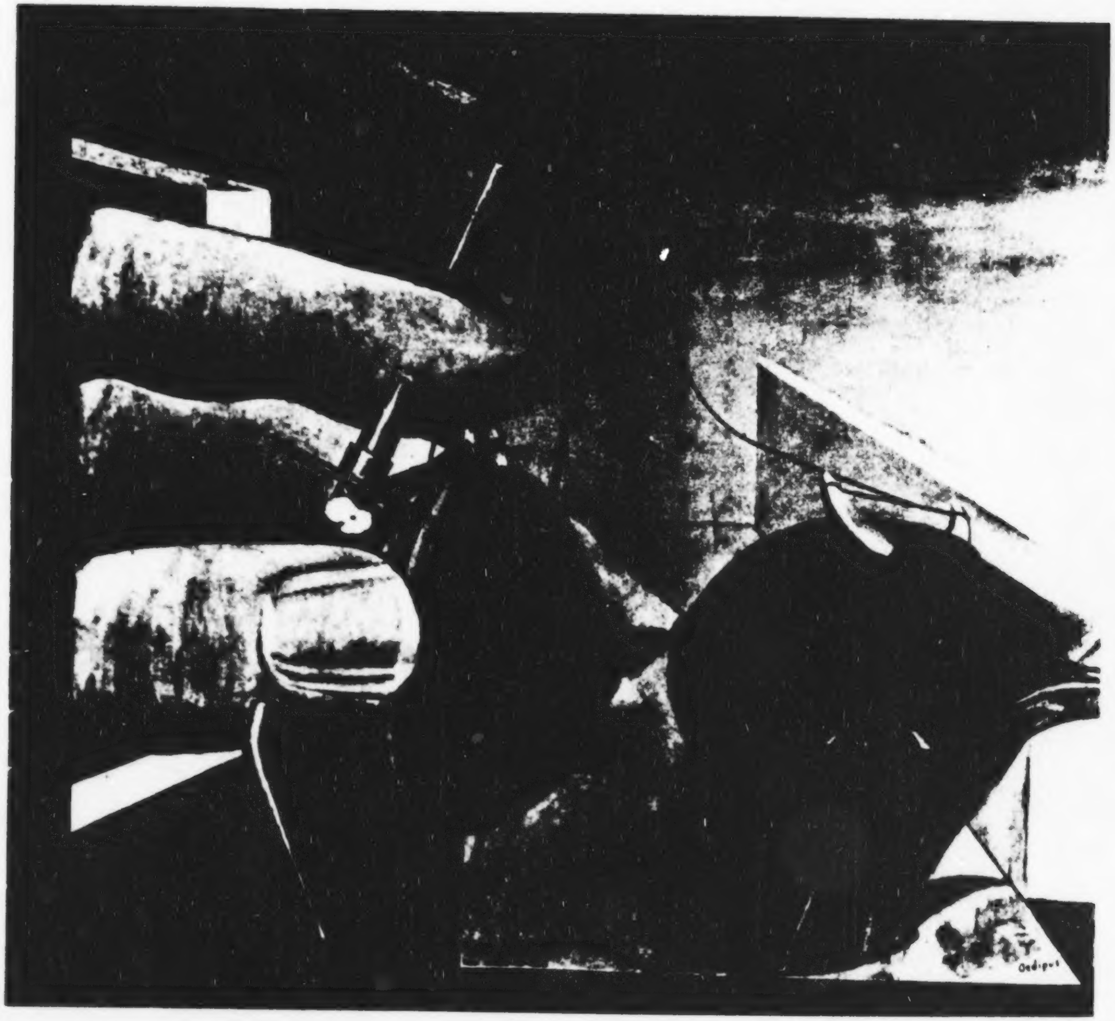

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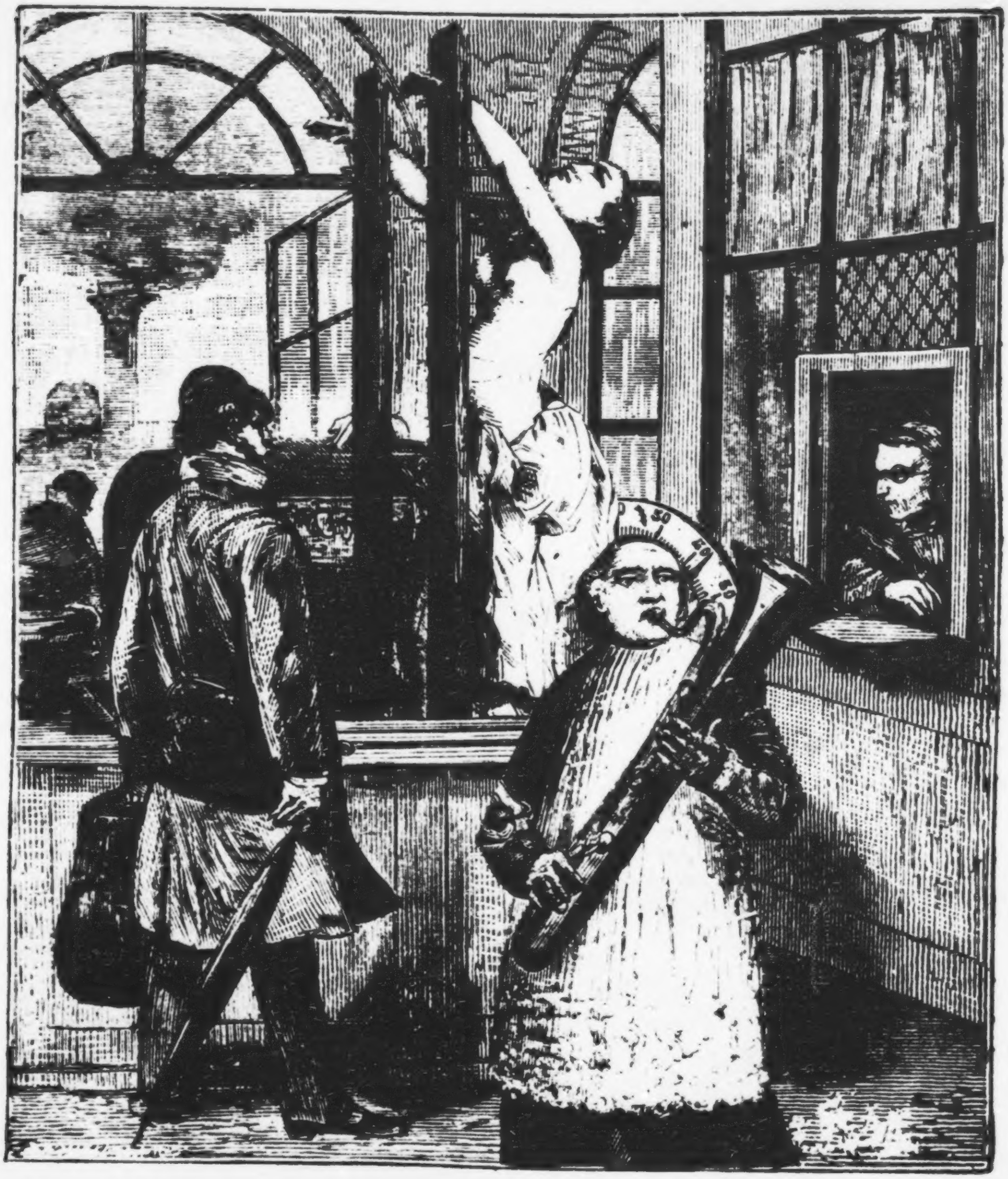

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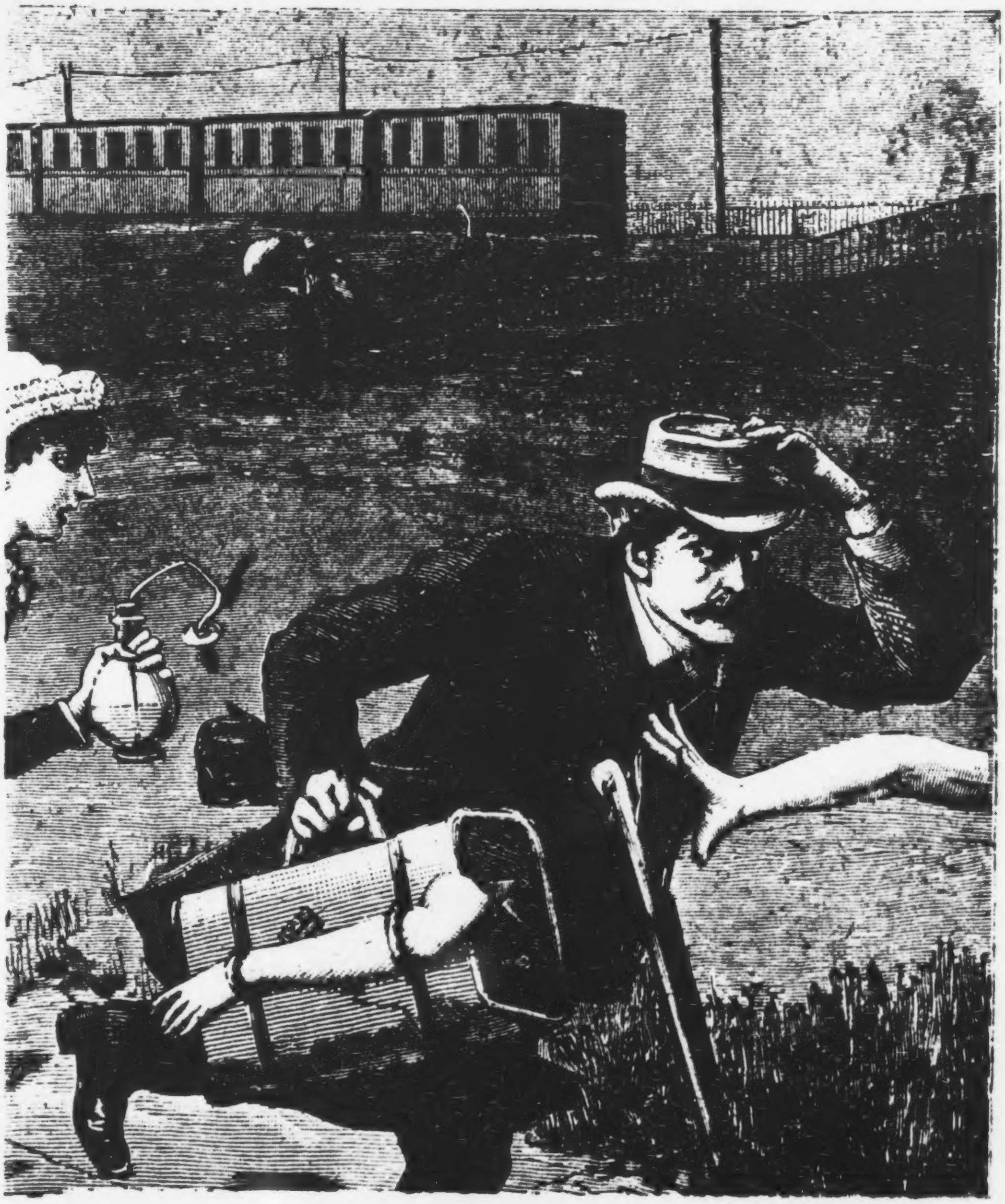

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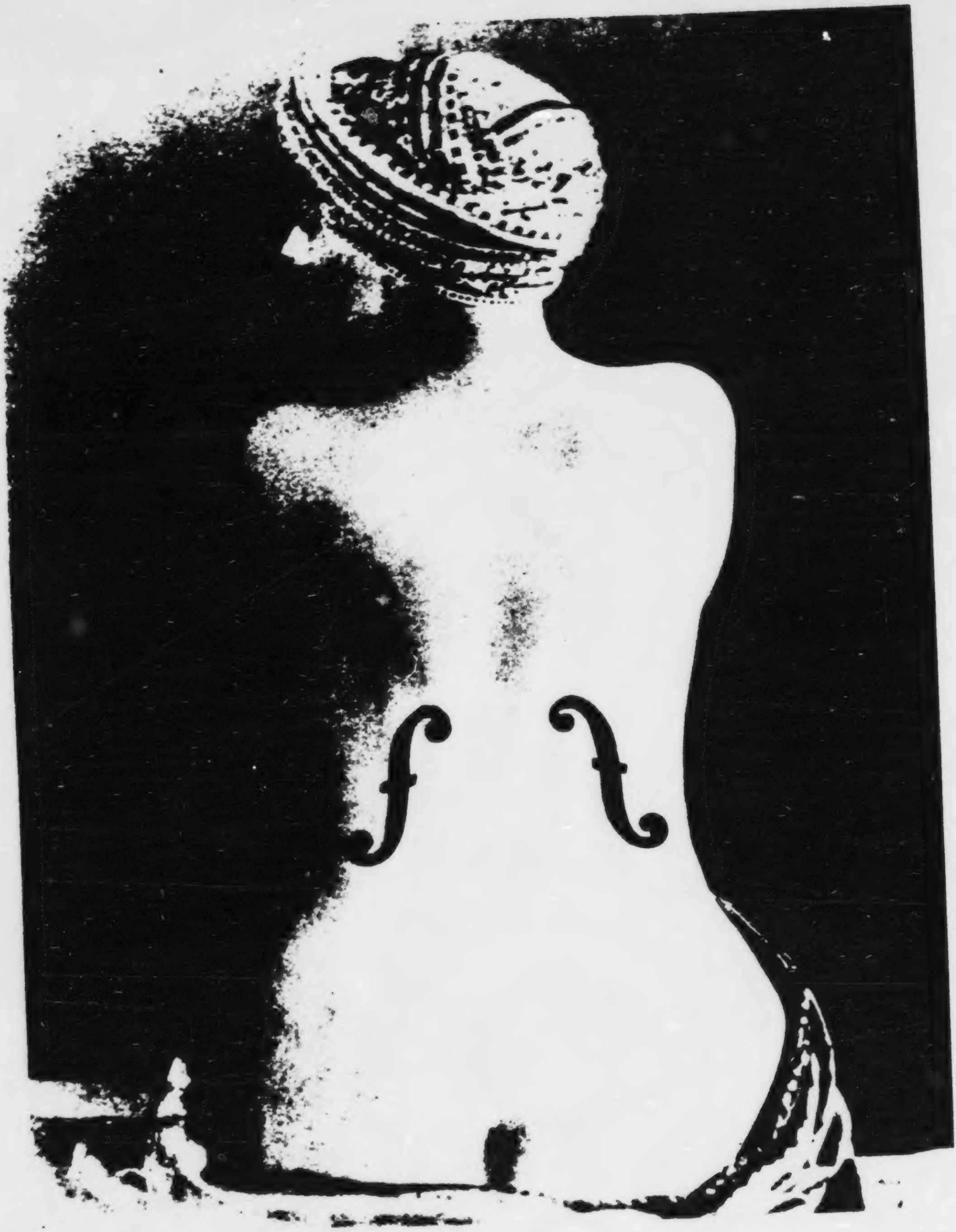

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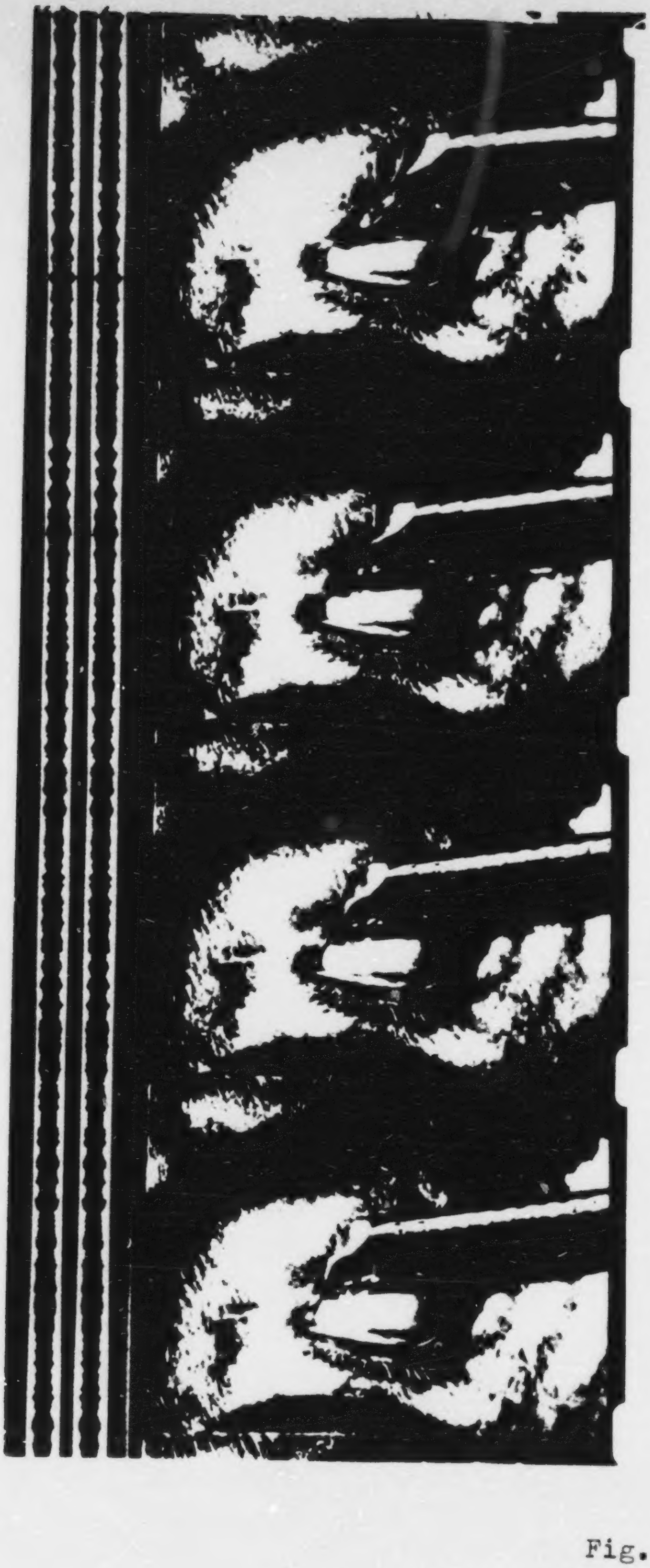

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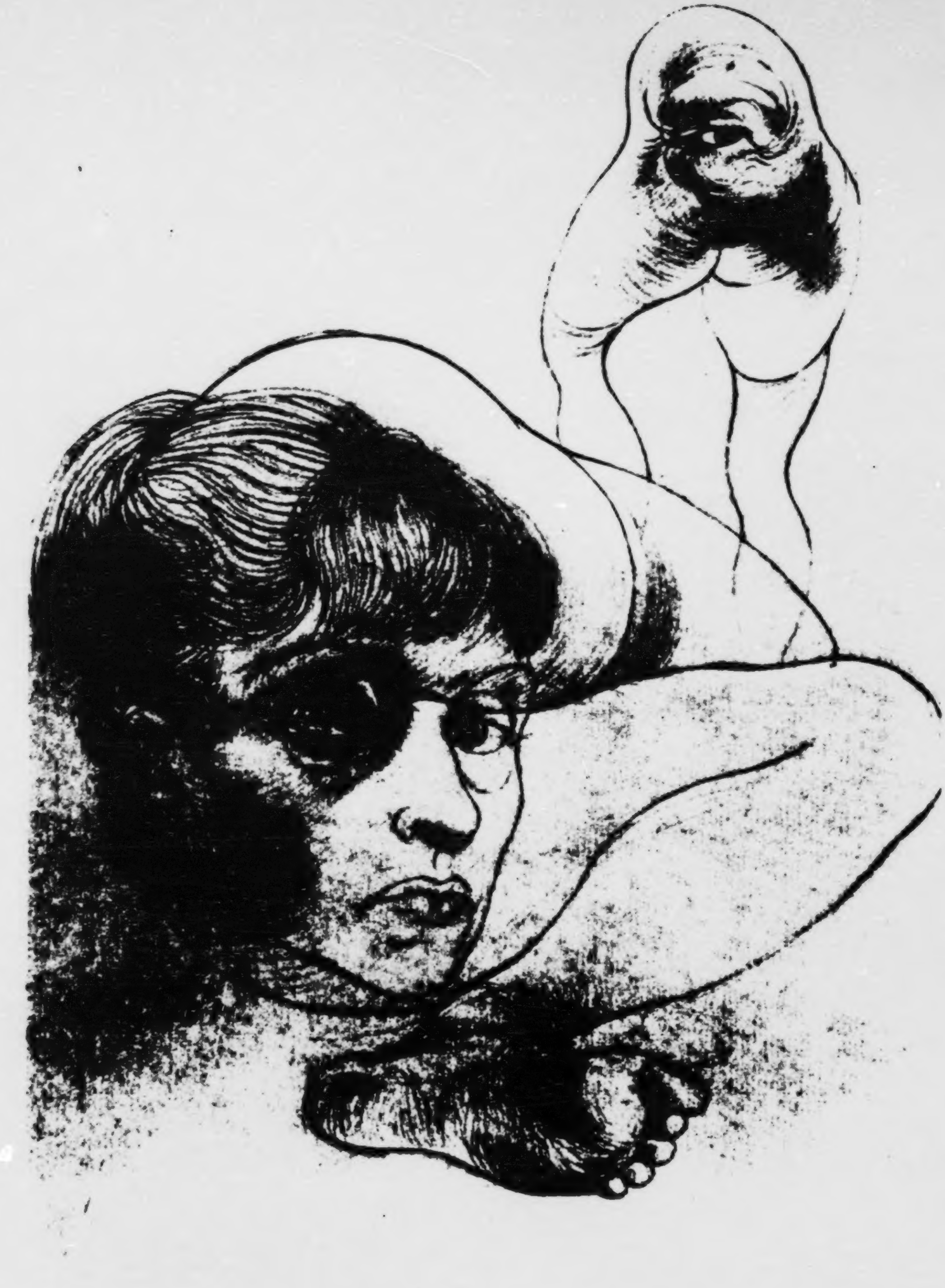

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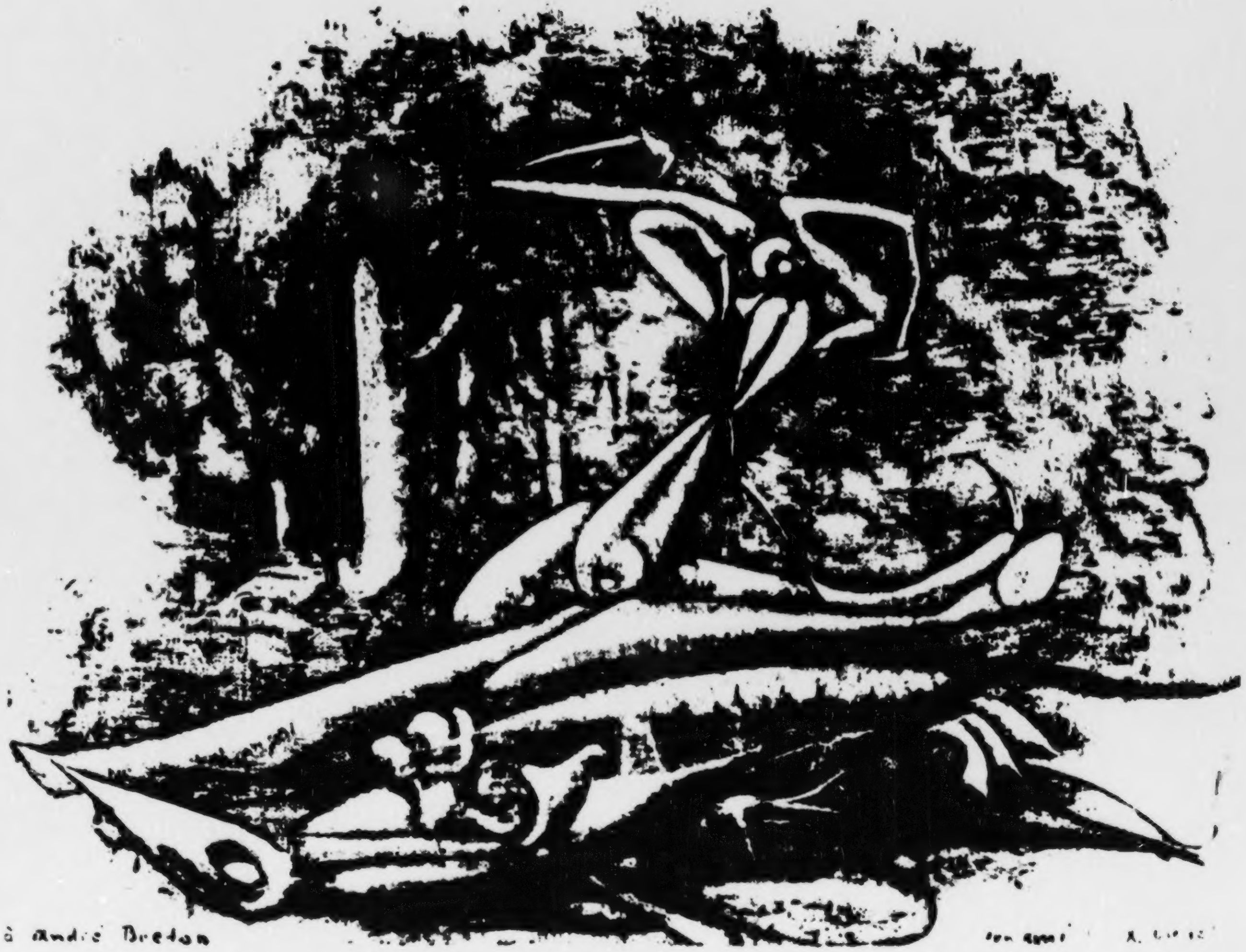

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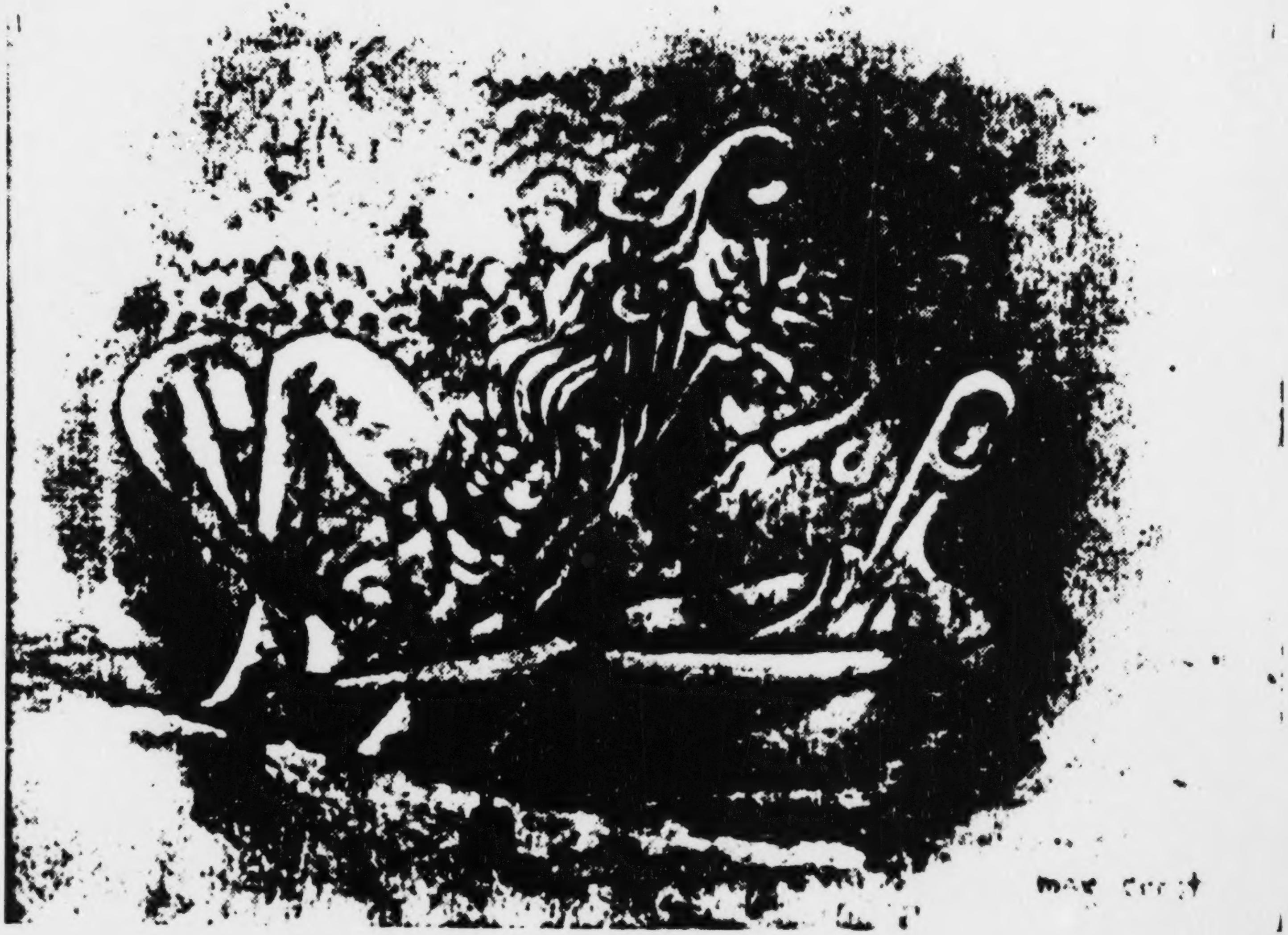

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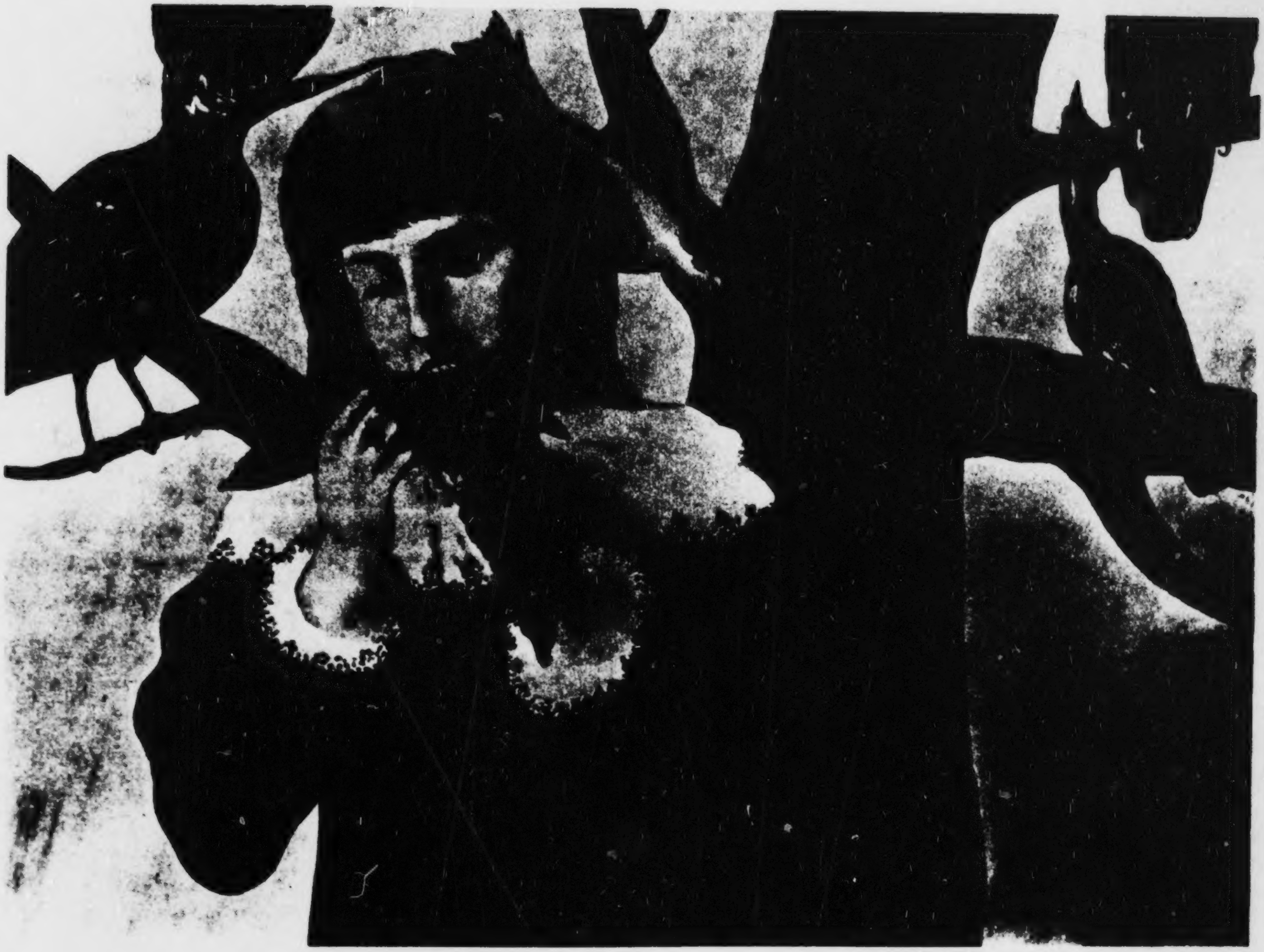
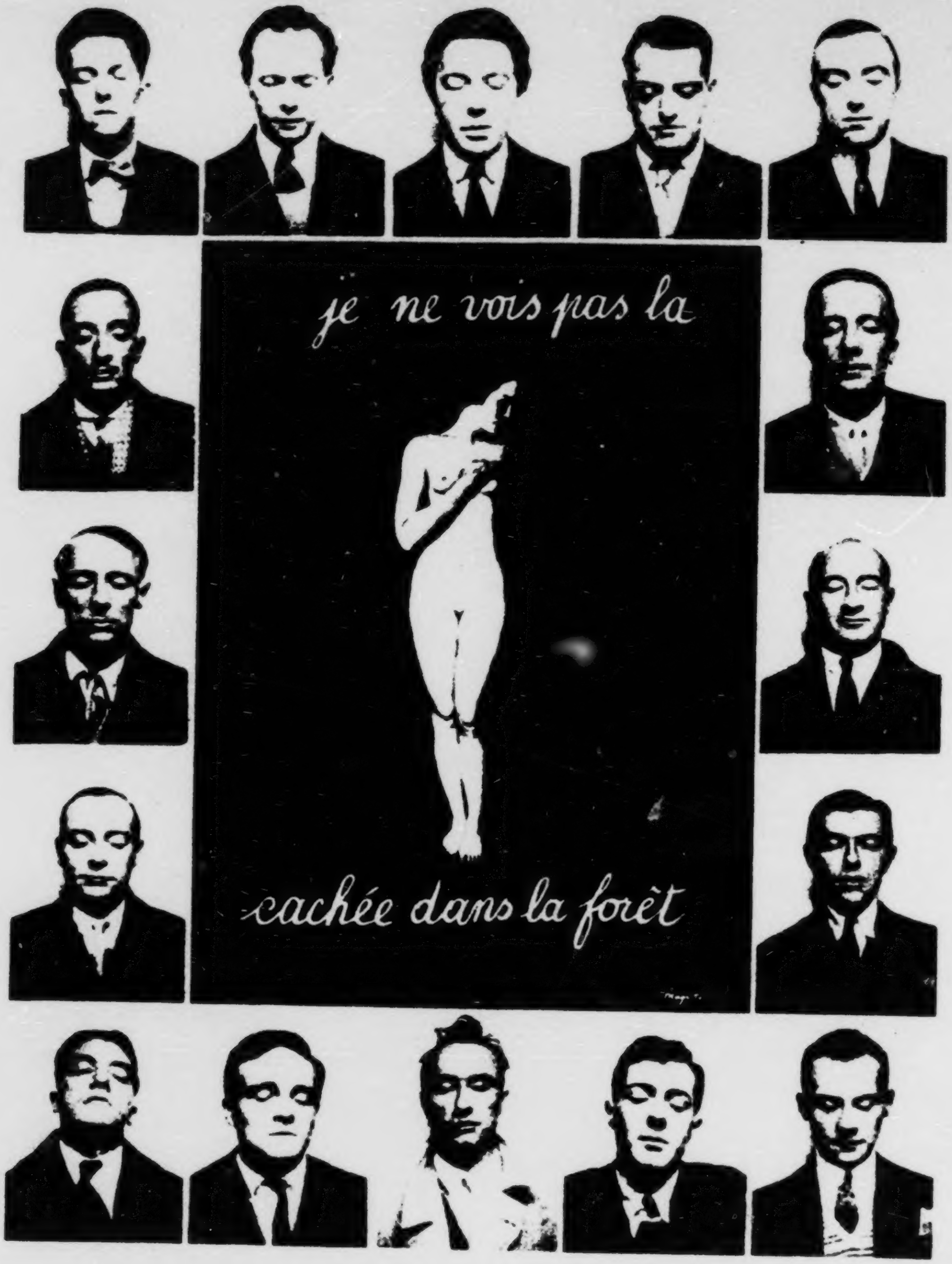


Fig. 11. Magritte.



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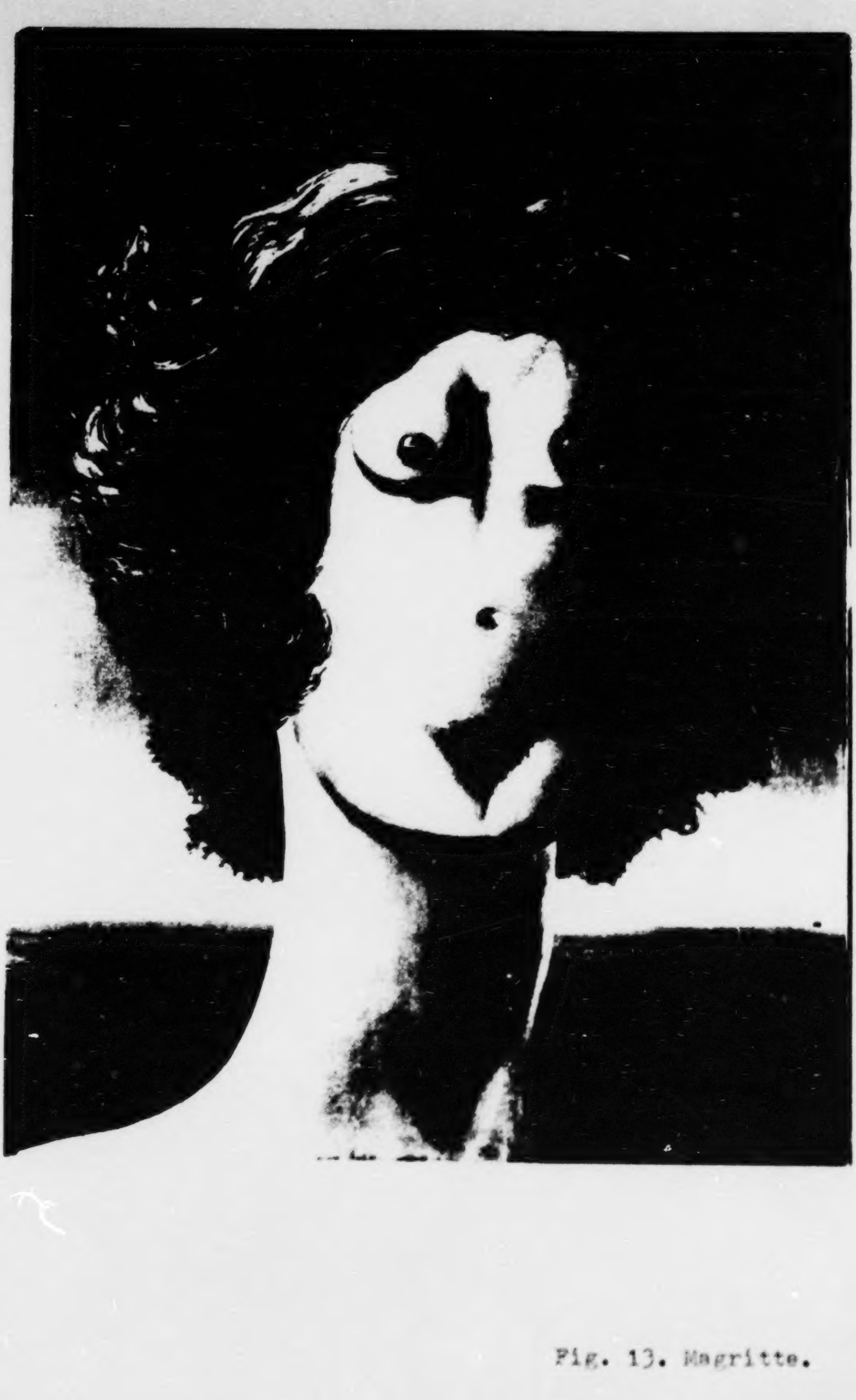

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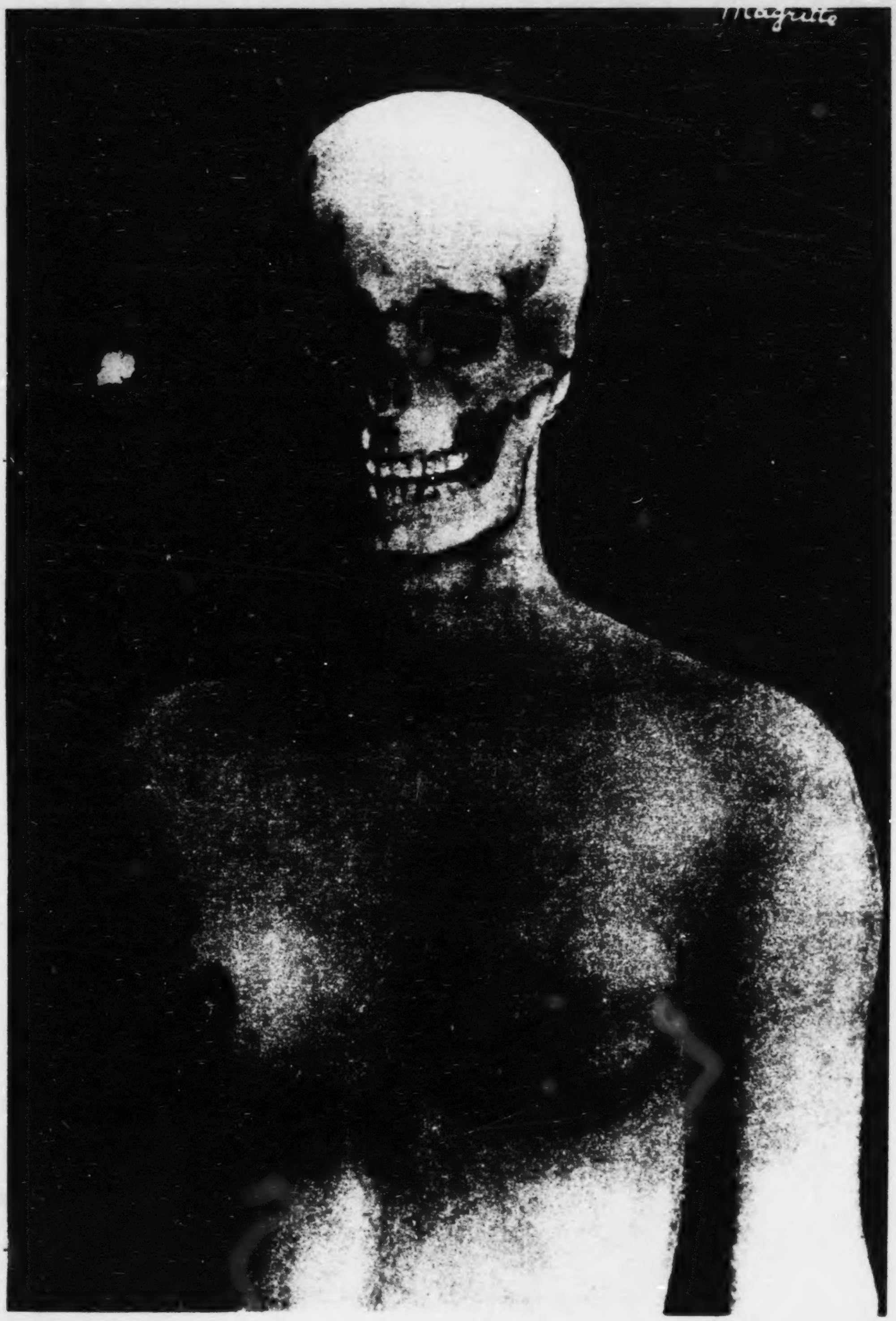

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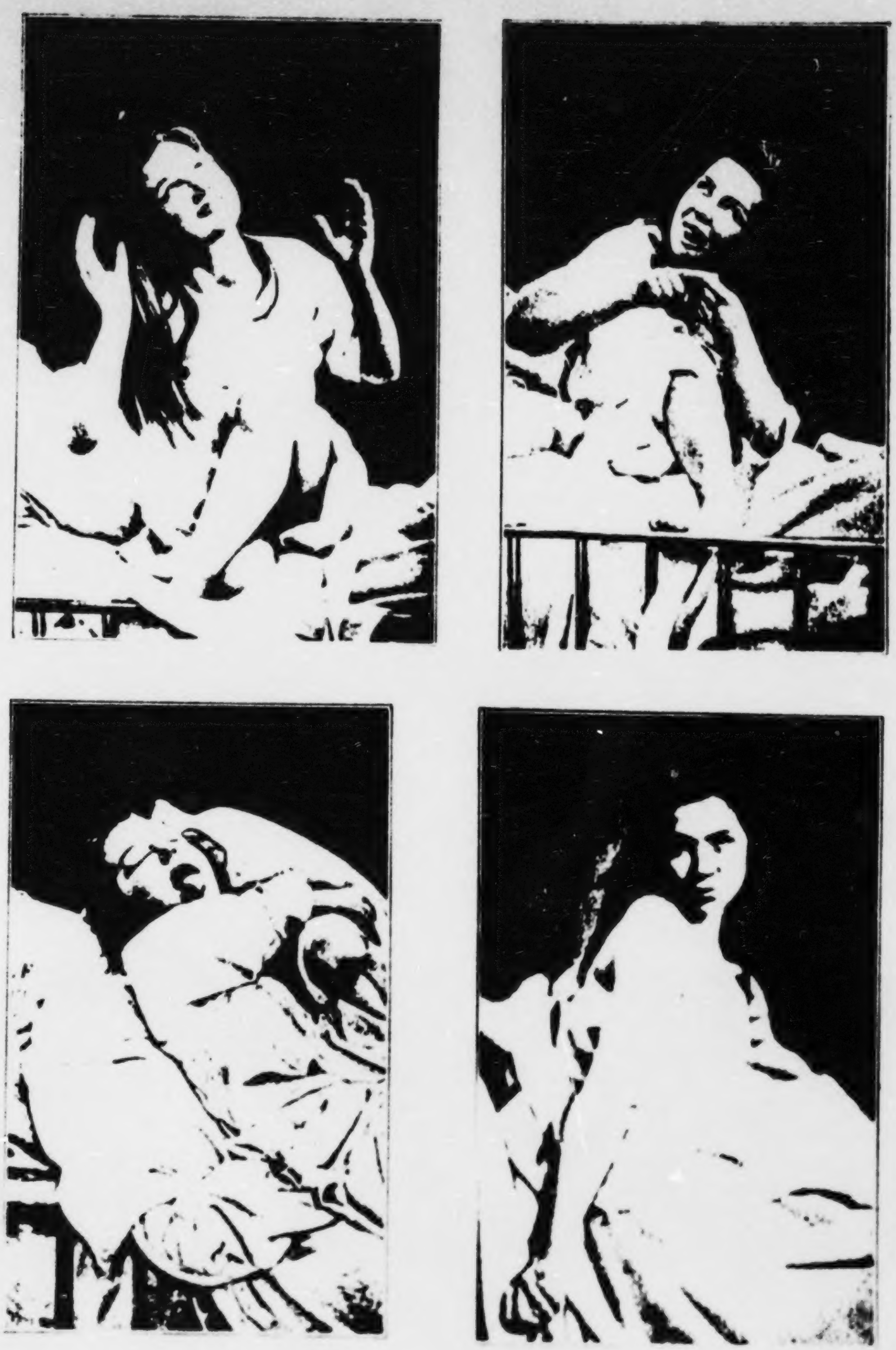

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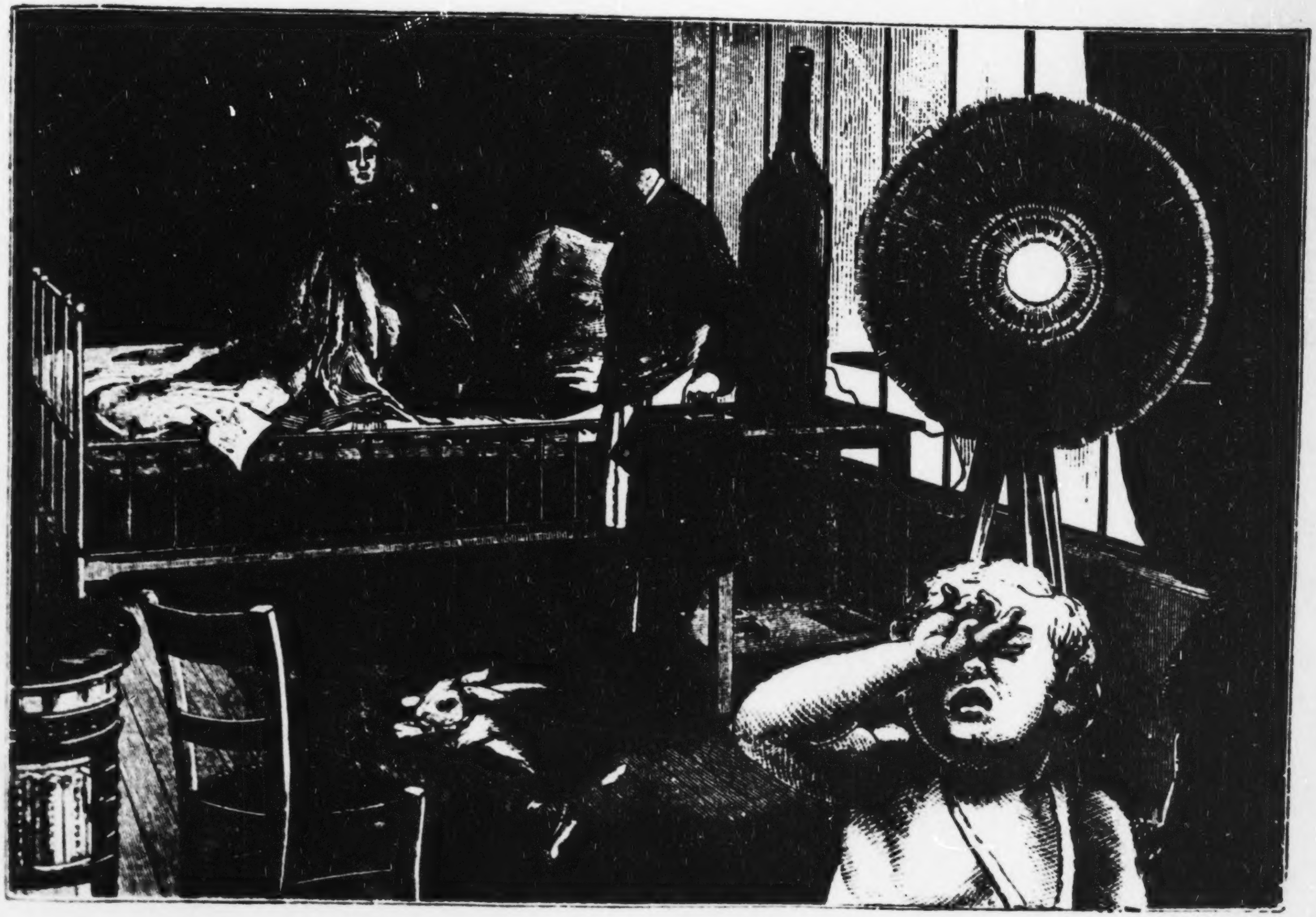

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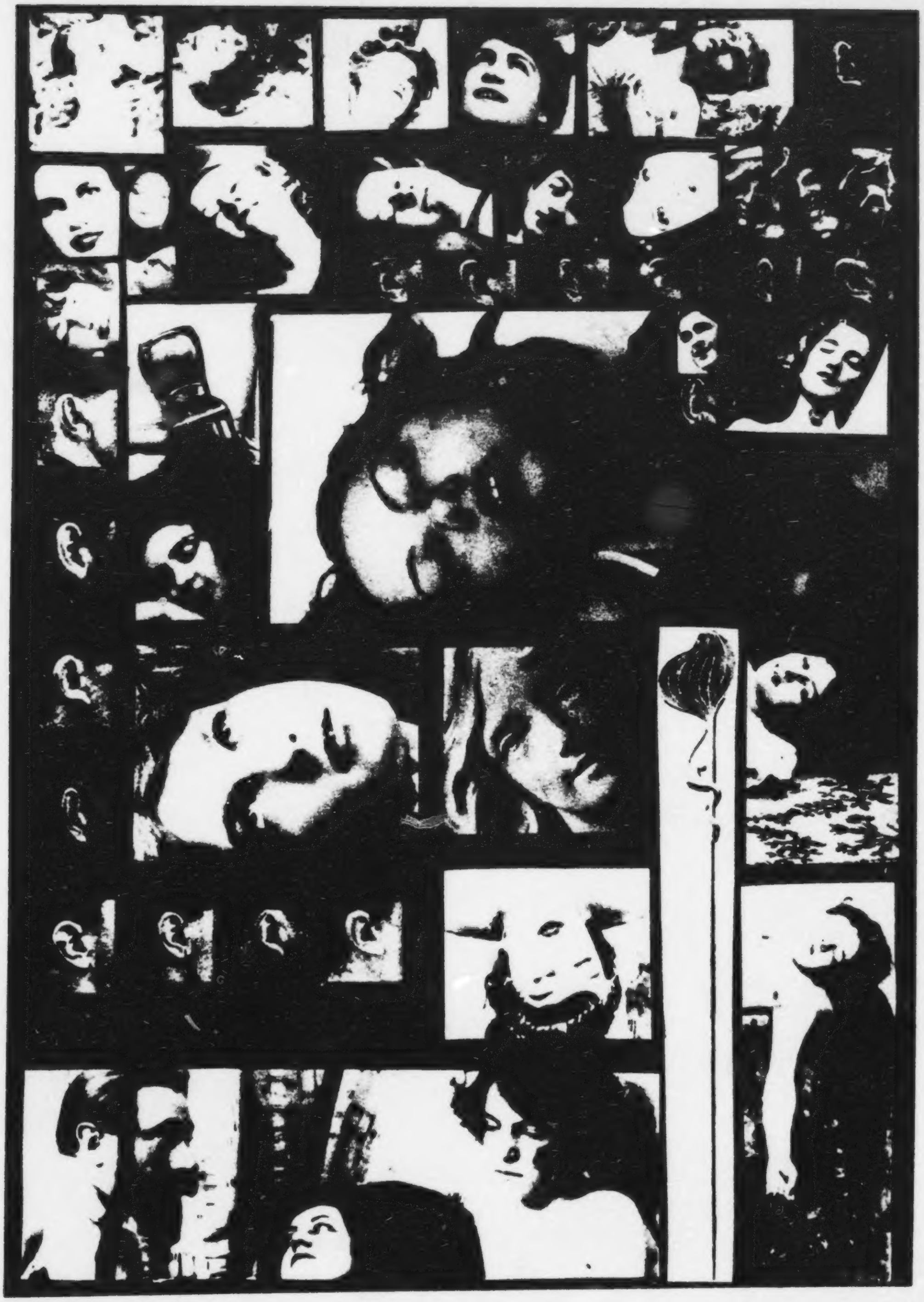

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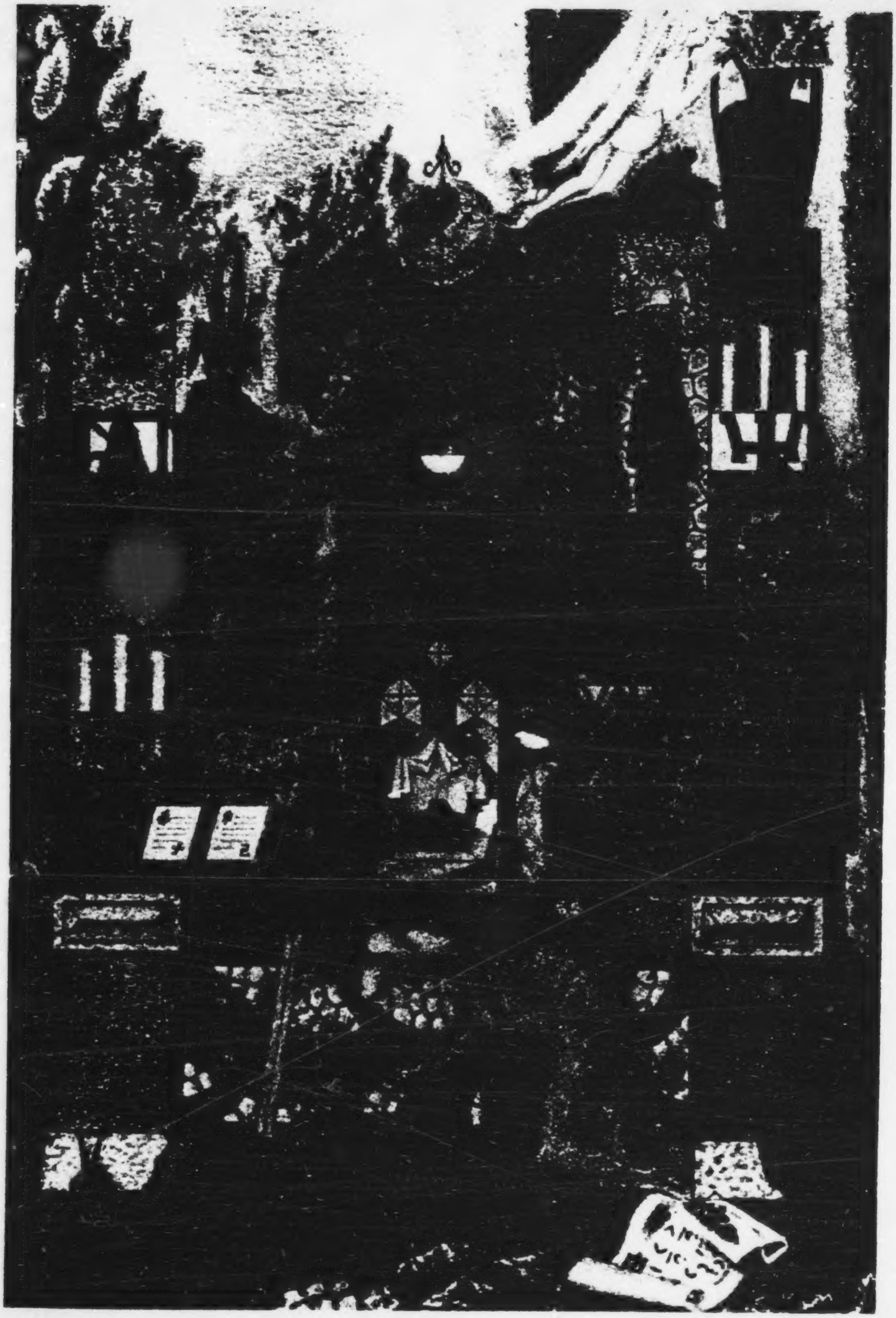

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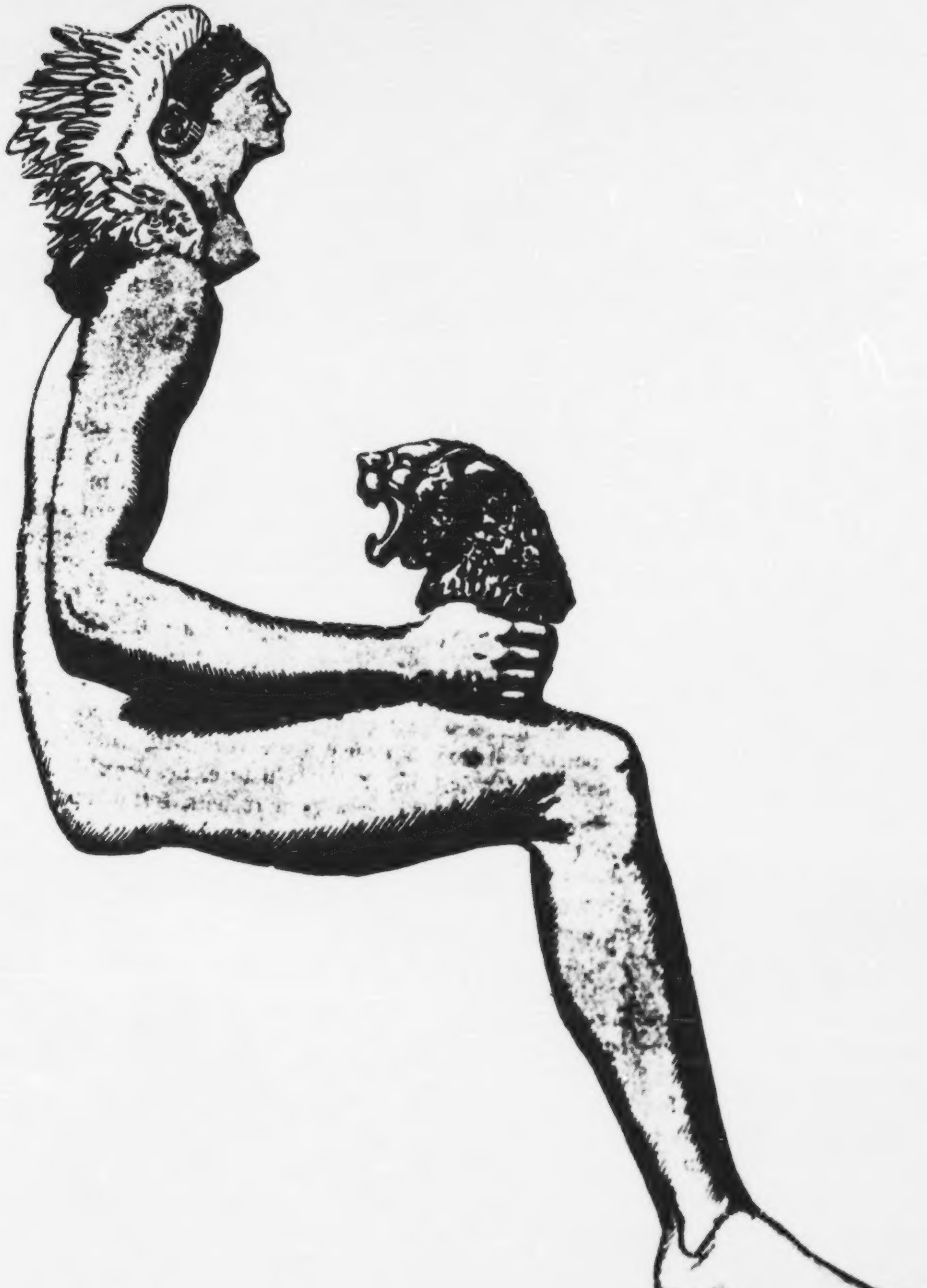

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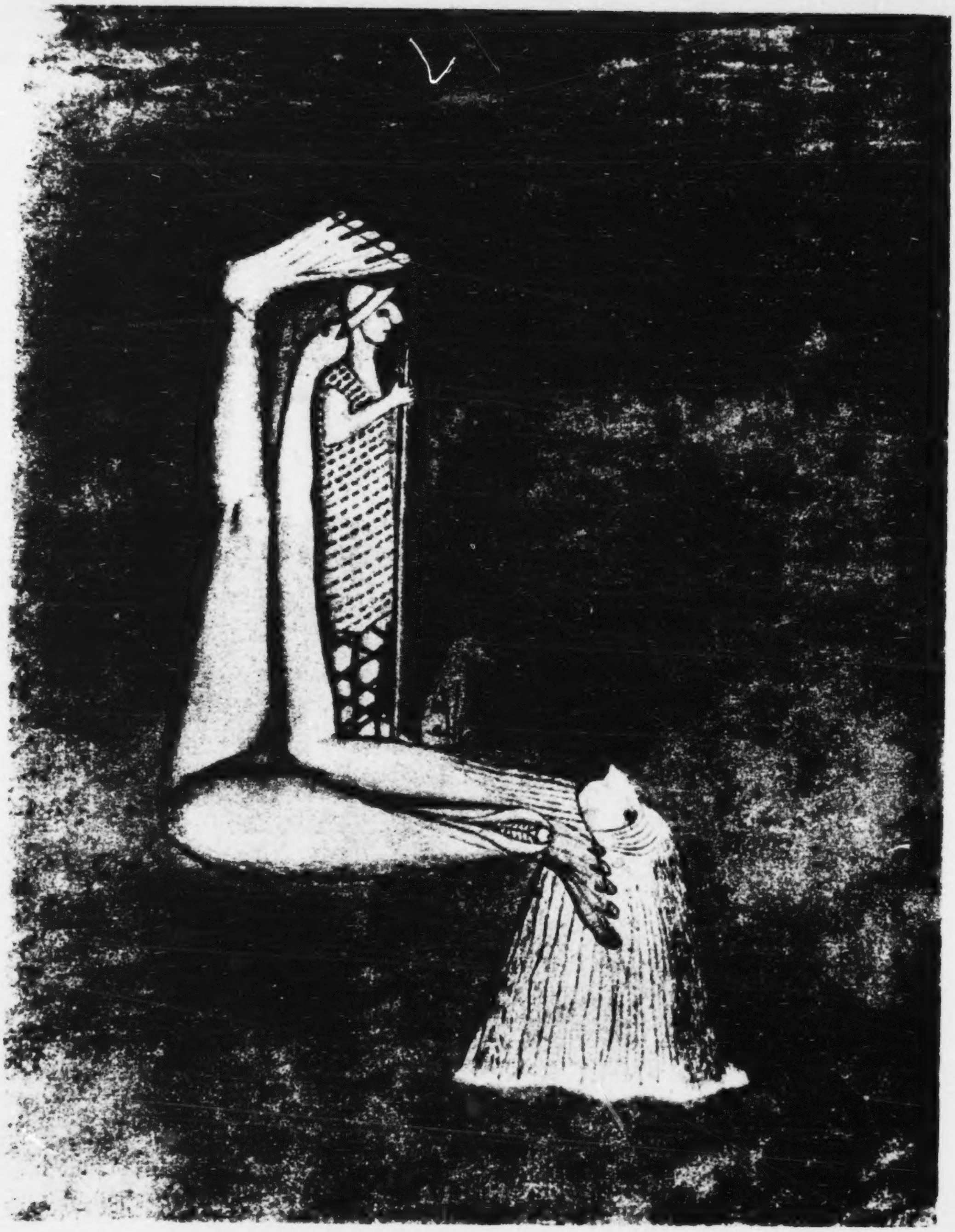

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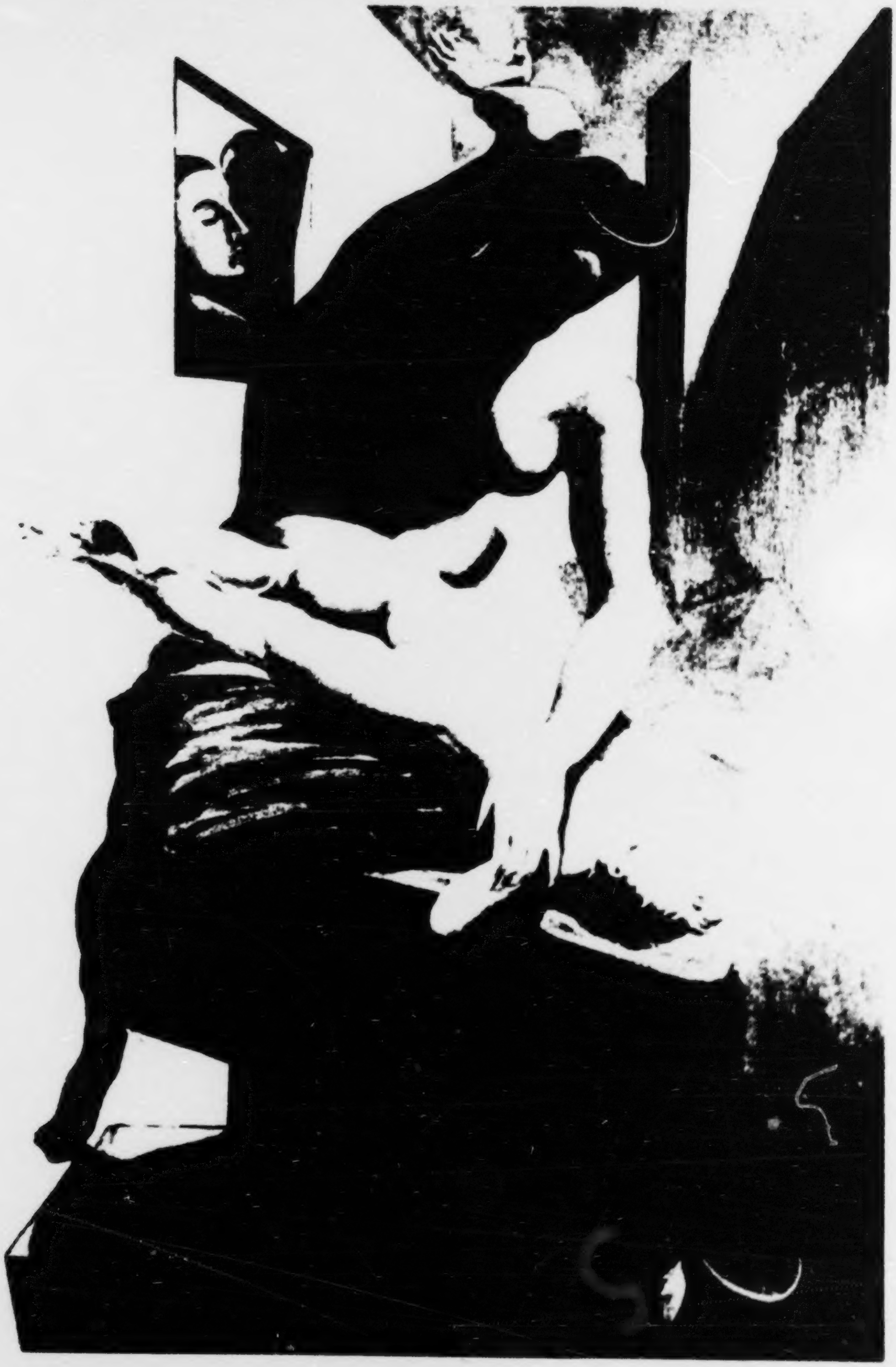

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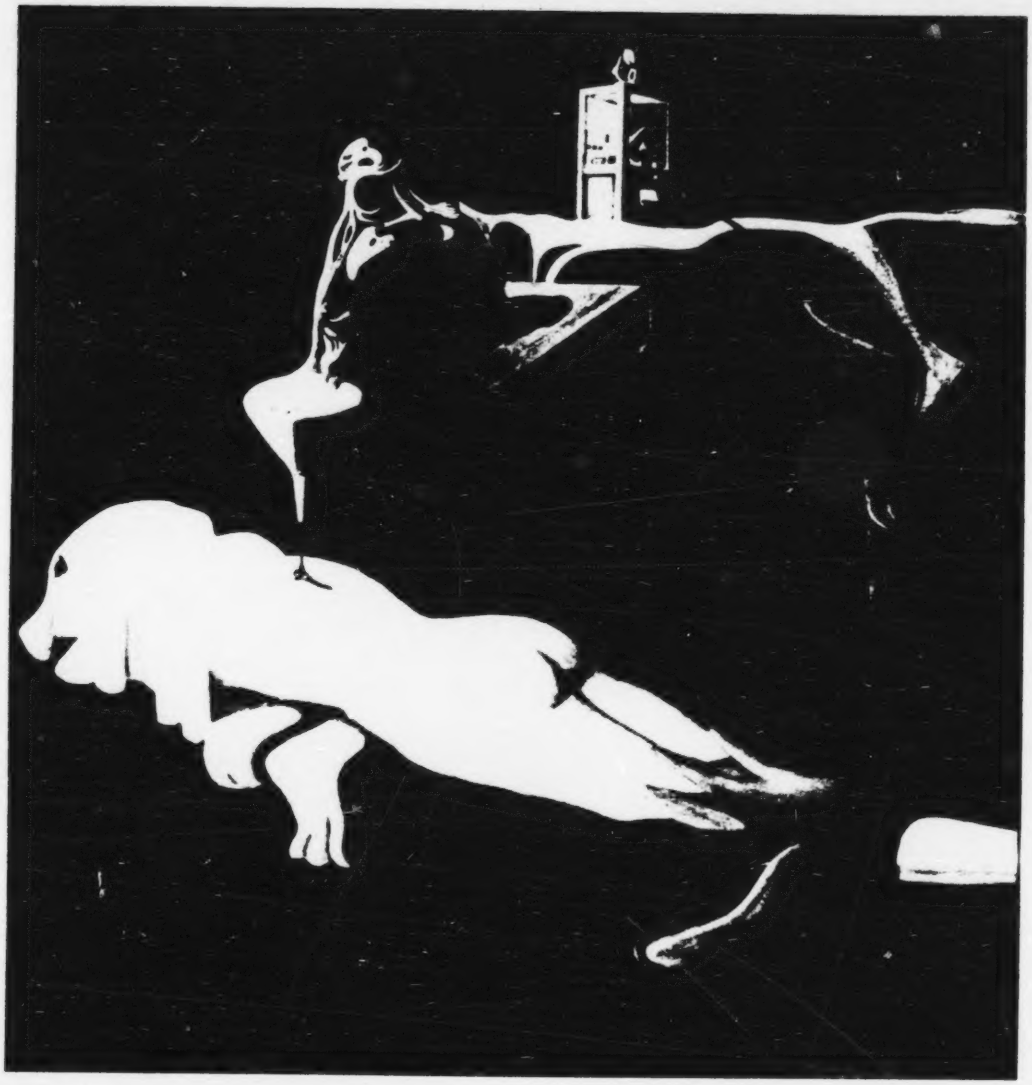

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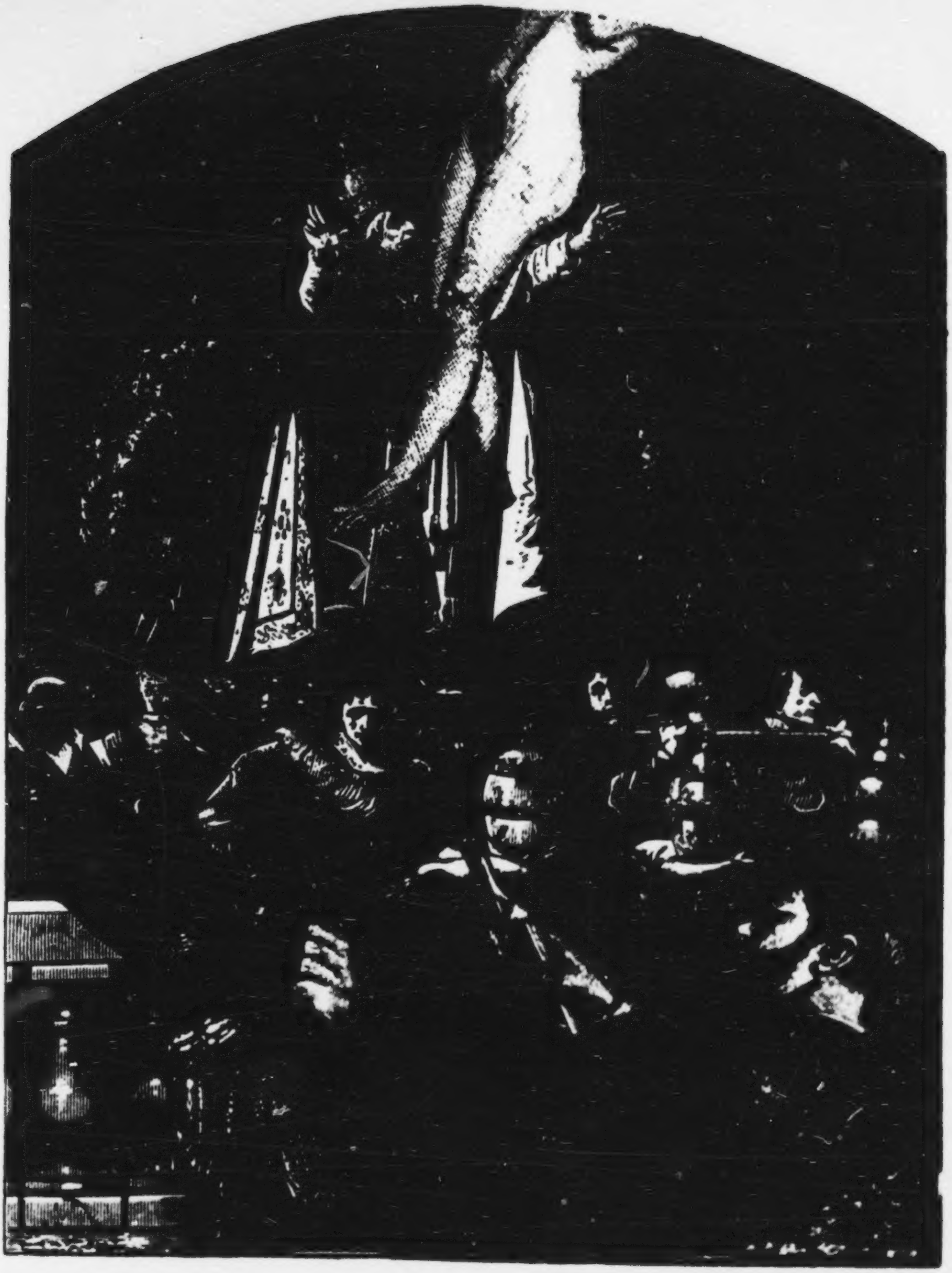

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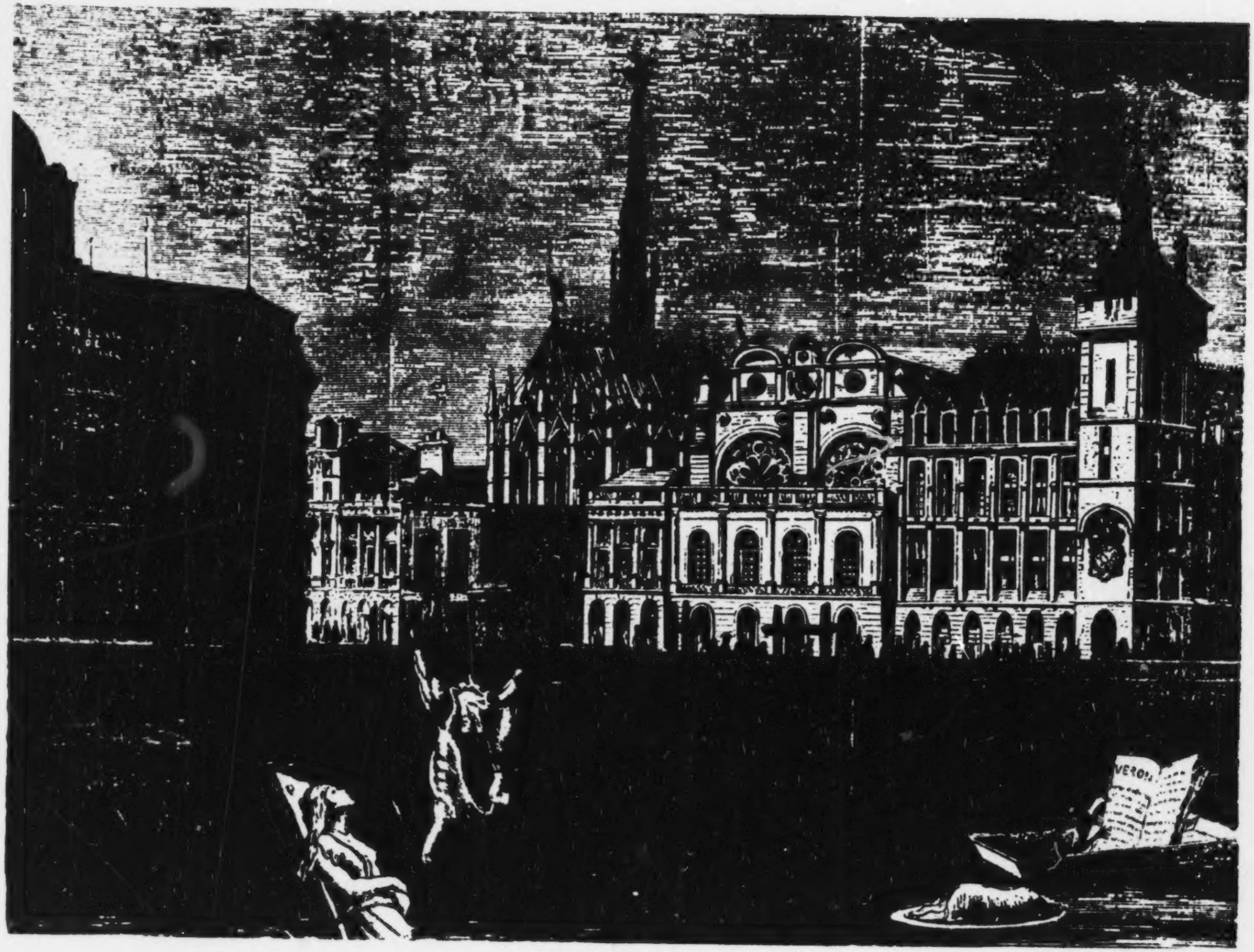

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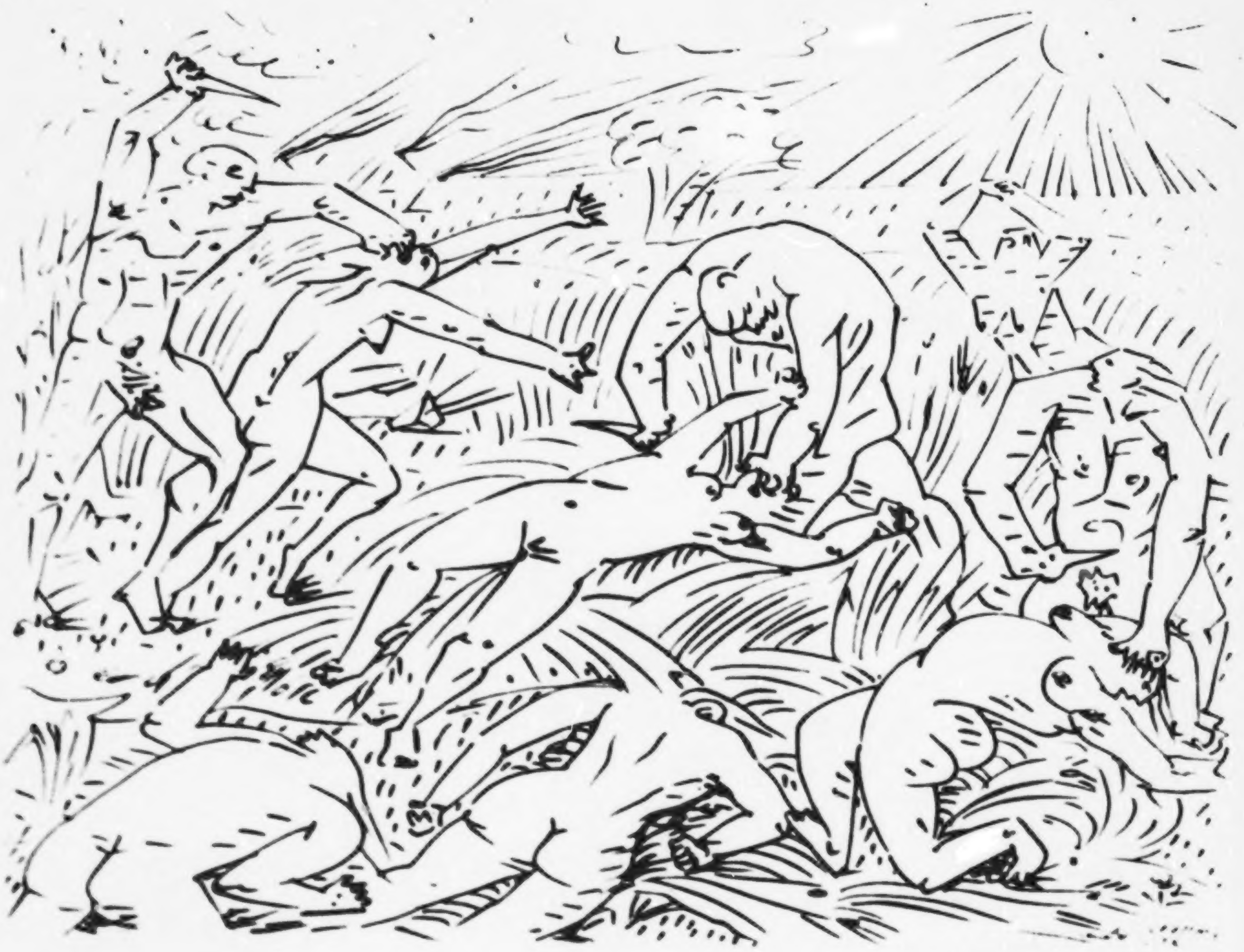

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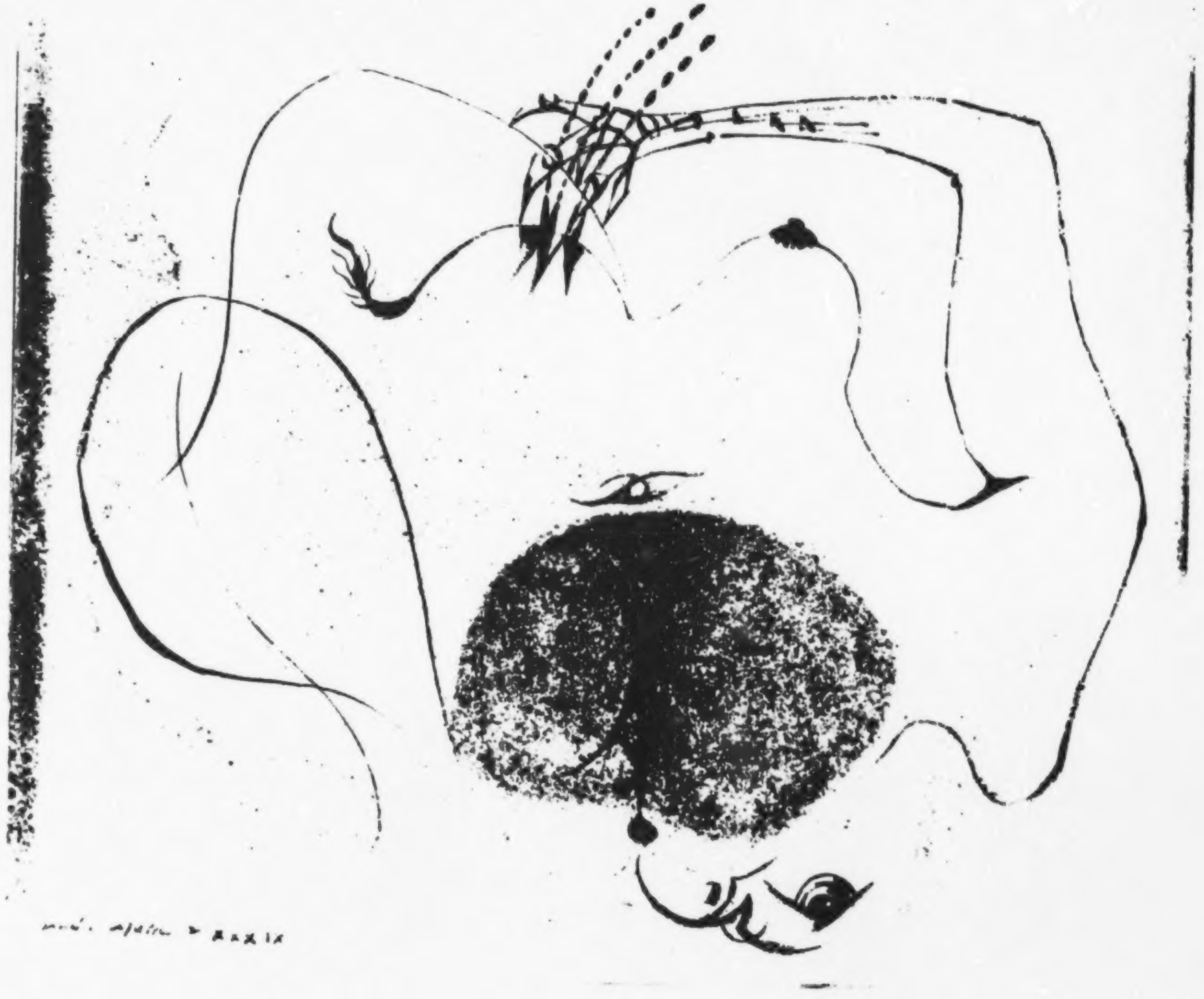

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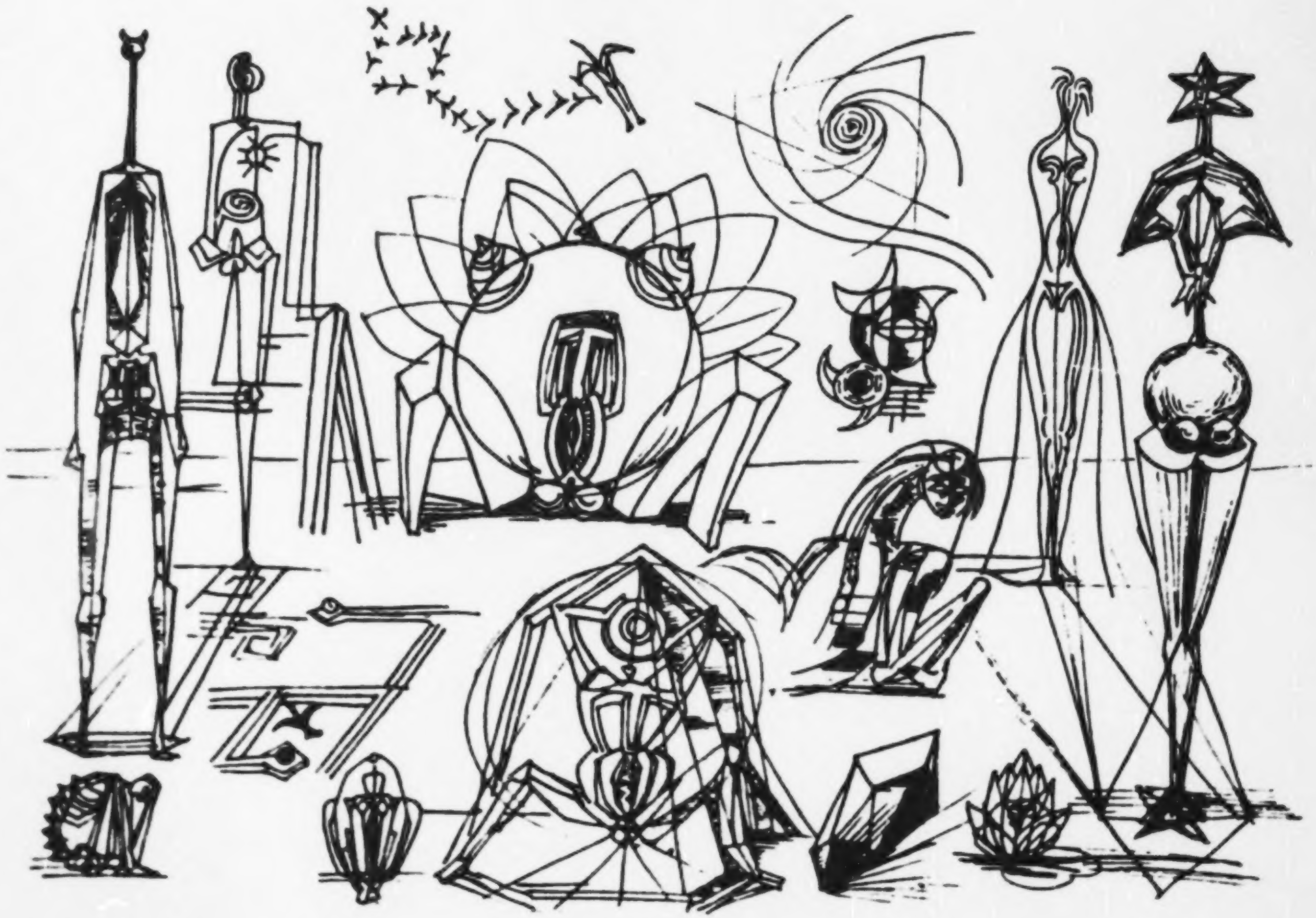

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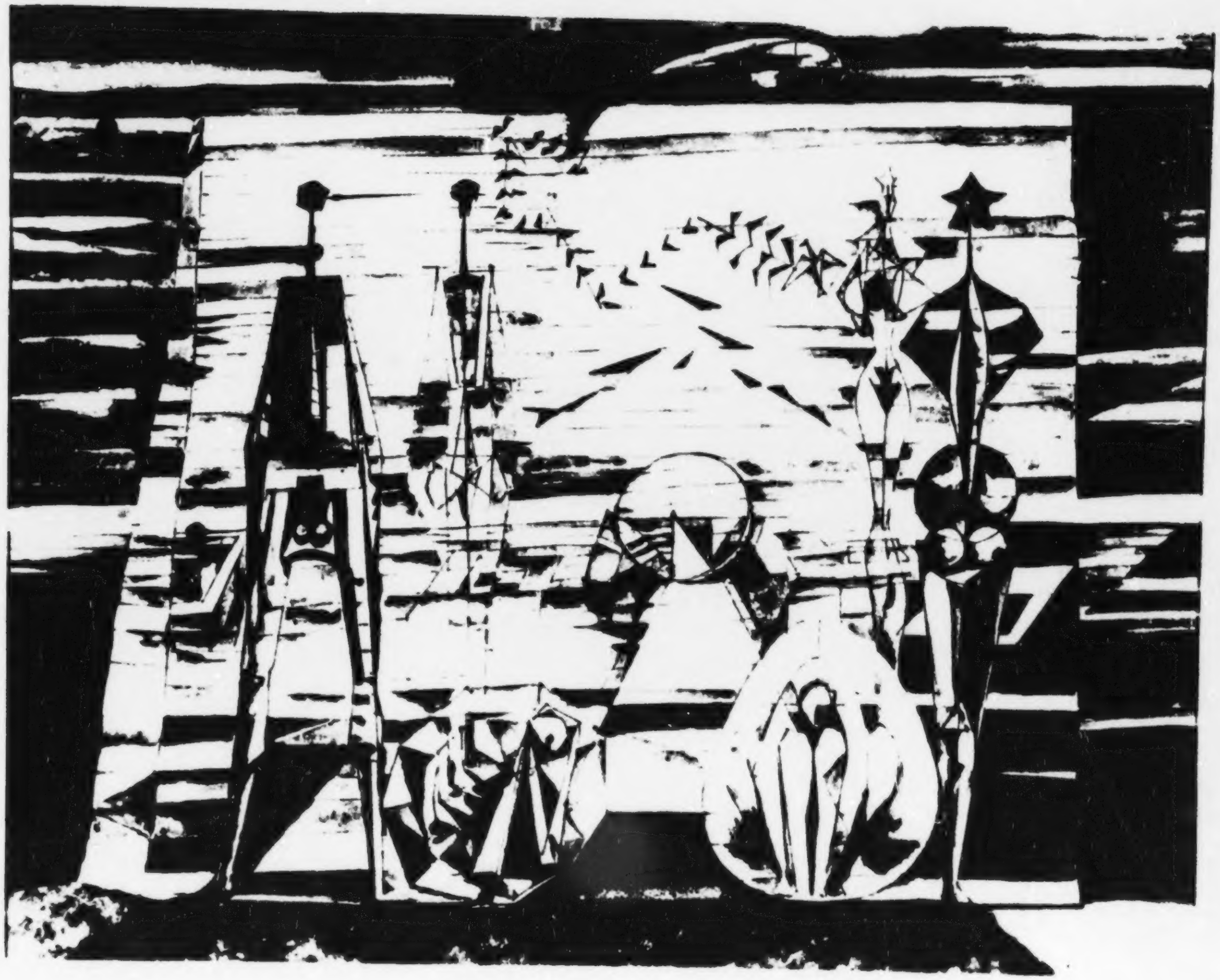

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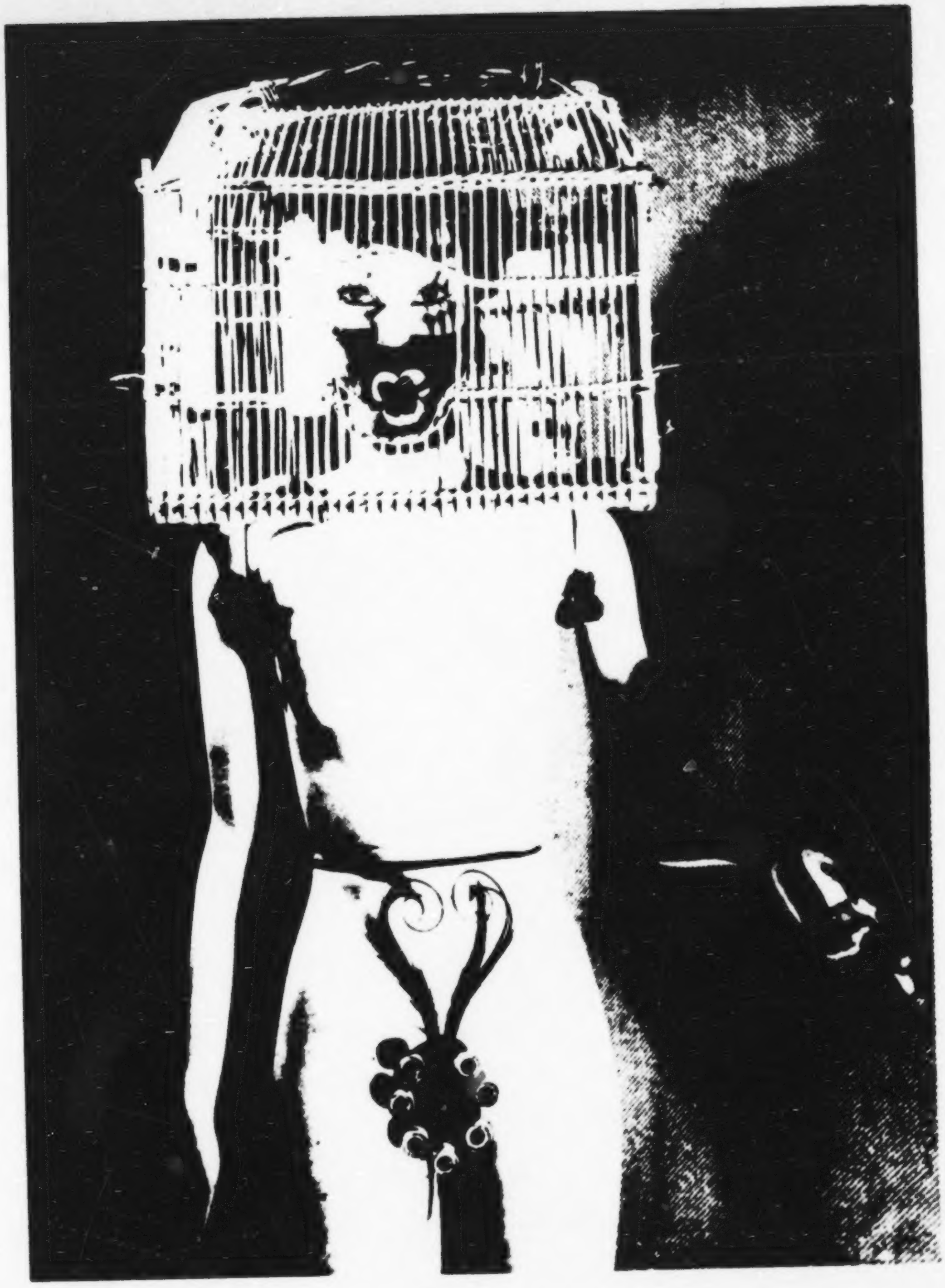


Fig. 31. Masson.

Lune : lait caillé, menstrue.

Deux coquillages rapprochés : un papillon

Le ciel est une peau d'animal (retournée)

Ces femmes nues endormies formant une configuration en [illegible] - l'extrémité des ossements rejoignant les cimes de la montagne, les poils qui y restent attachés ; leur marge végétation.

Cœur d'une pensée : Temple érotique.

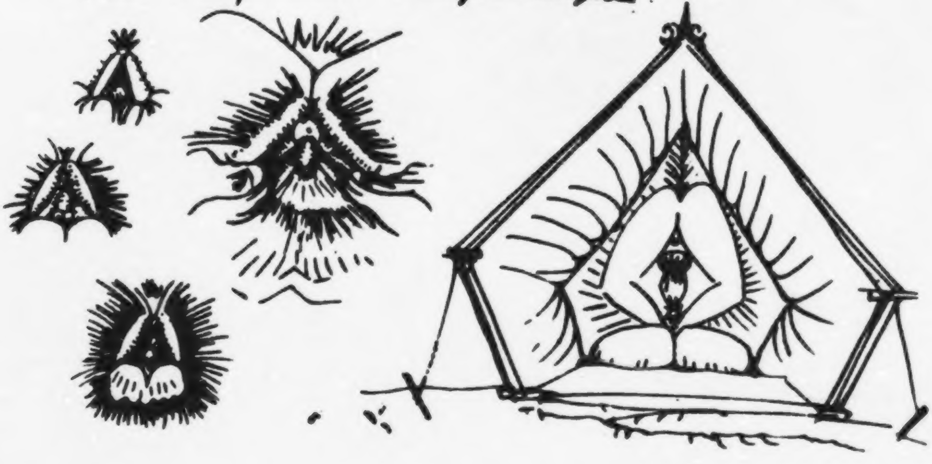
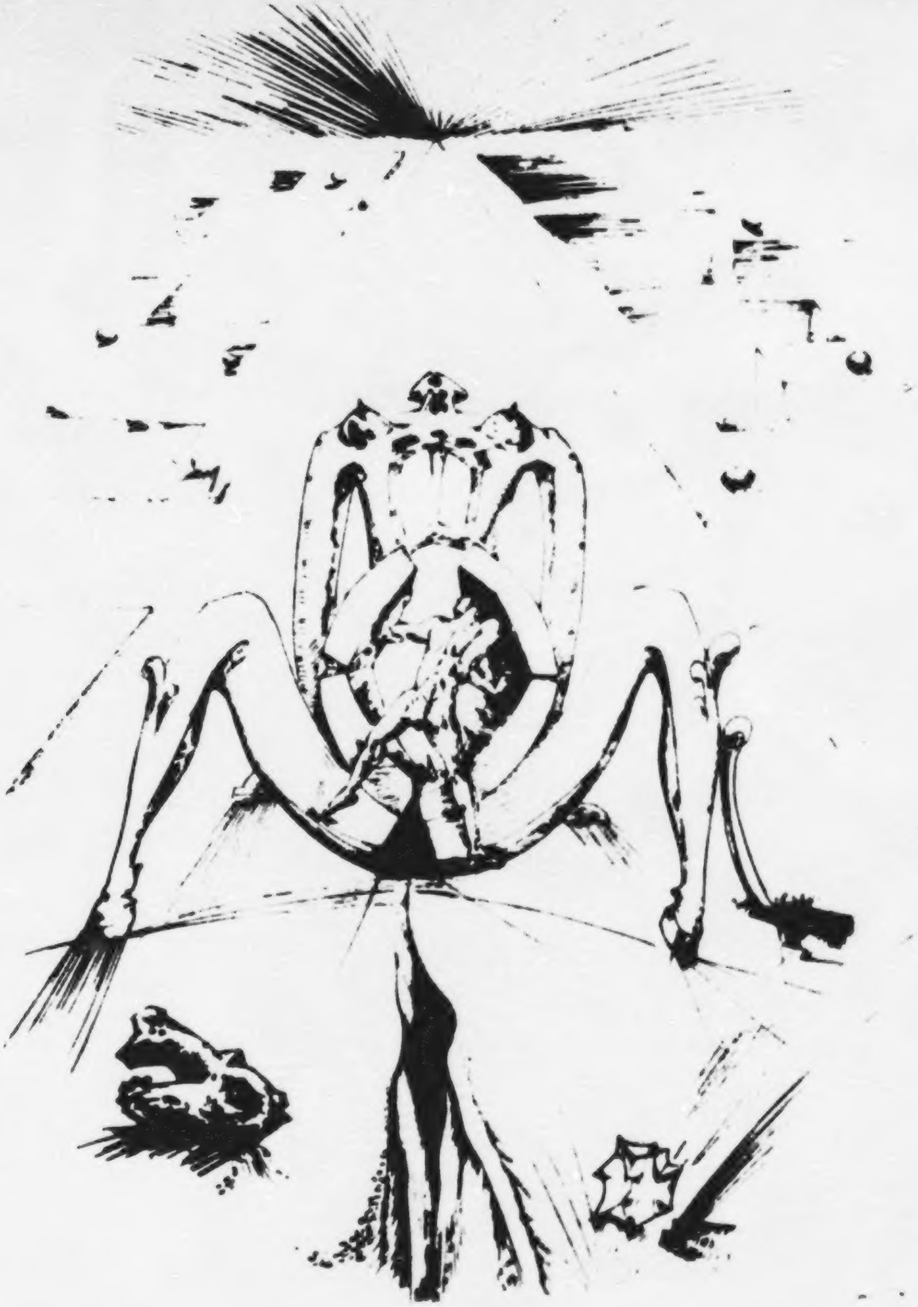


Fig. 32. Masson.



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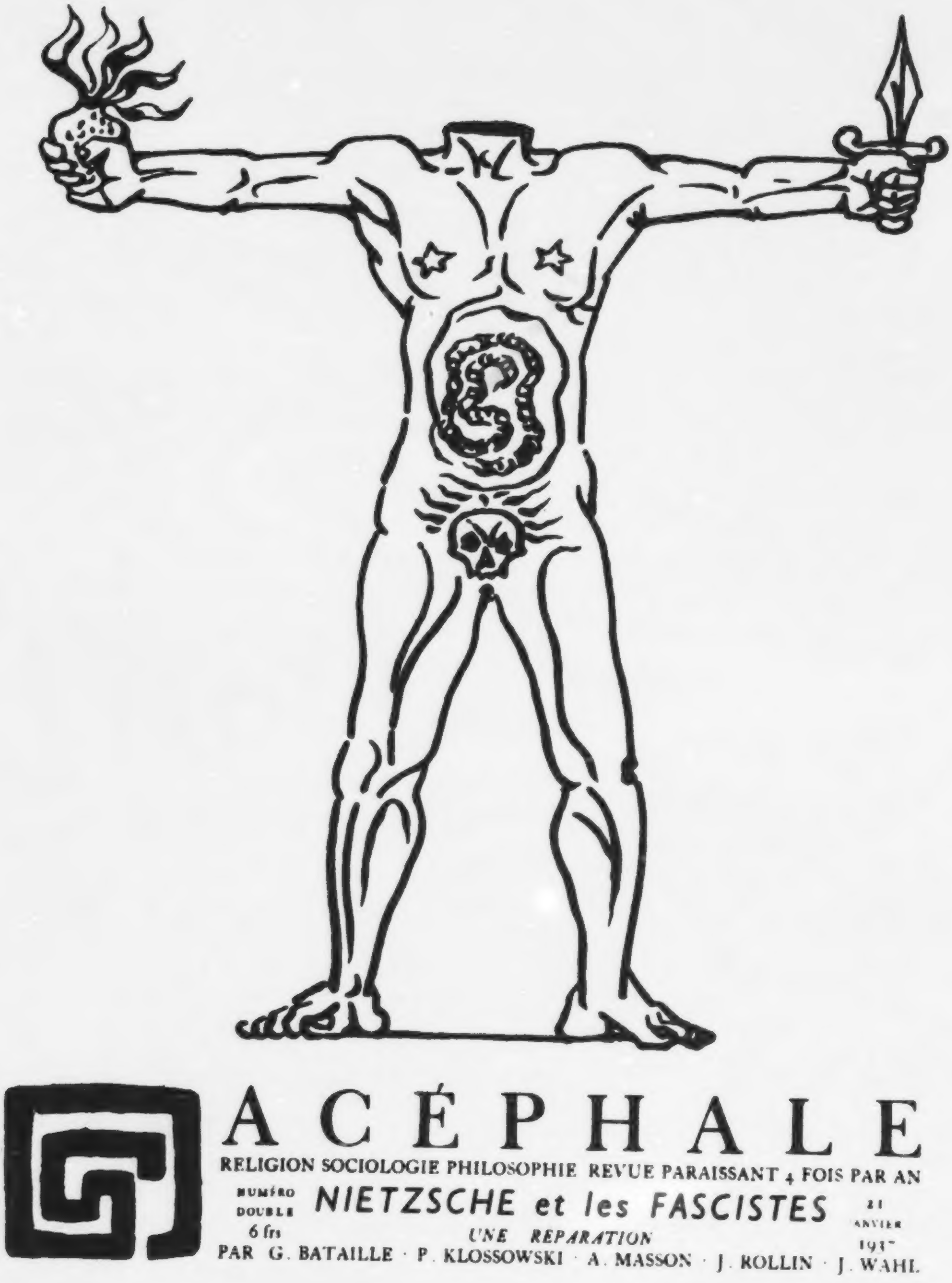

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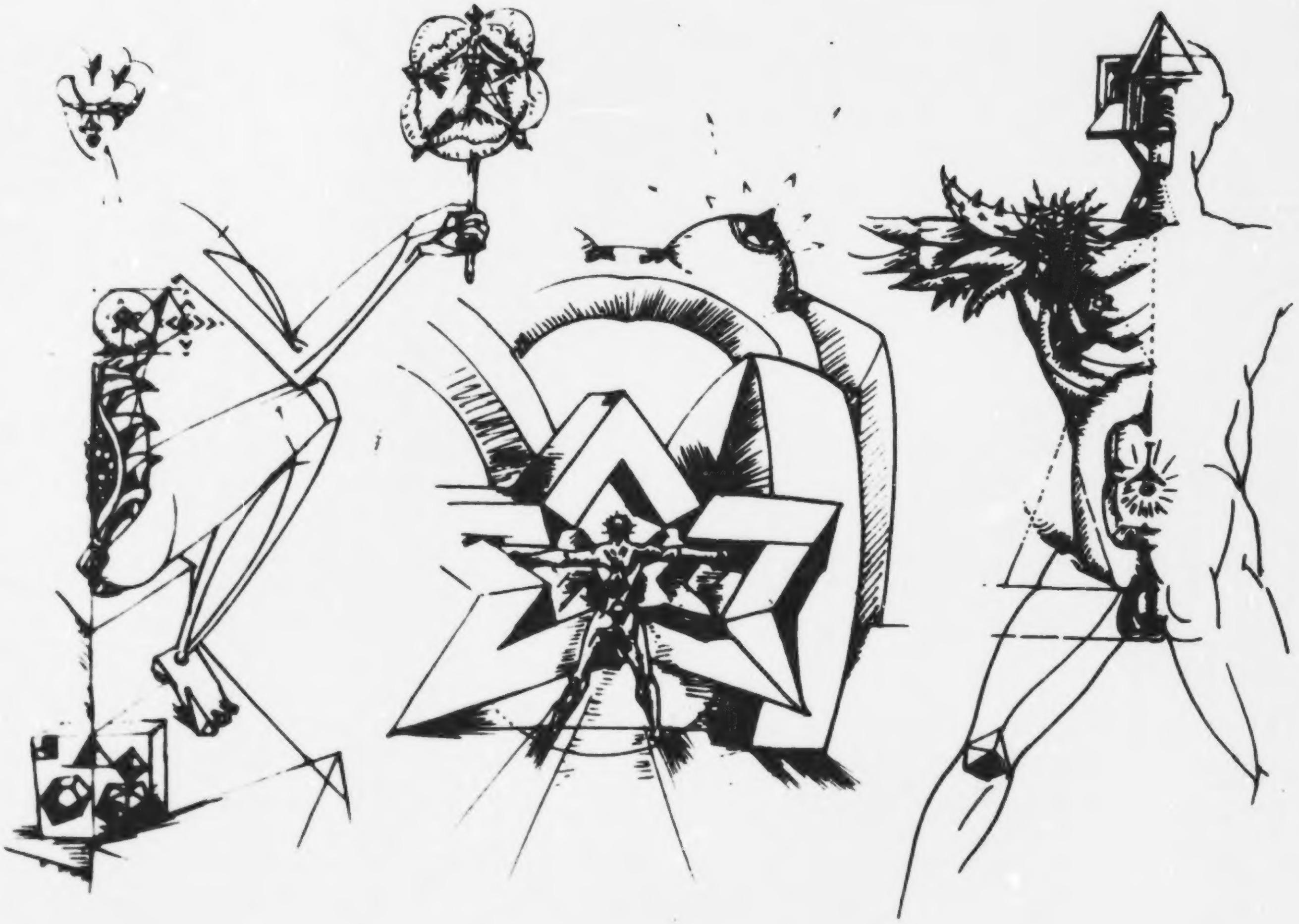
UNE REPARATION

21 JANVIER 1937

PAR G. BATAILLE · P. KLOSSOWSKI · A. MASSON · J. ROLLIN · J. WAHL

Fig. 34. Masson.



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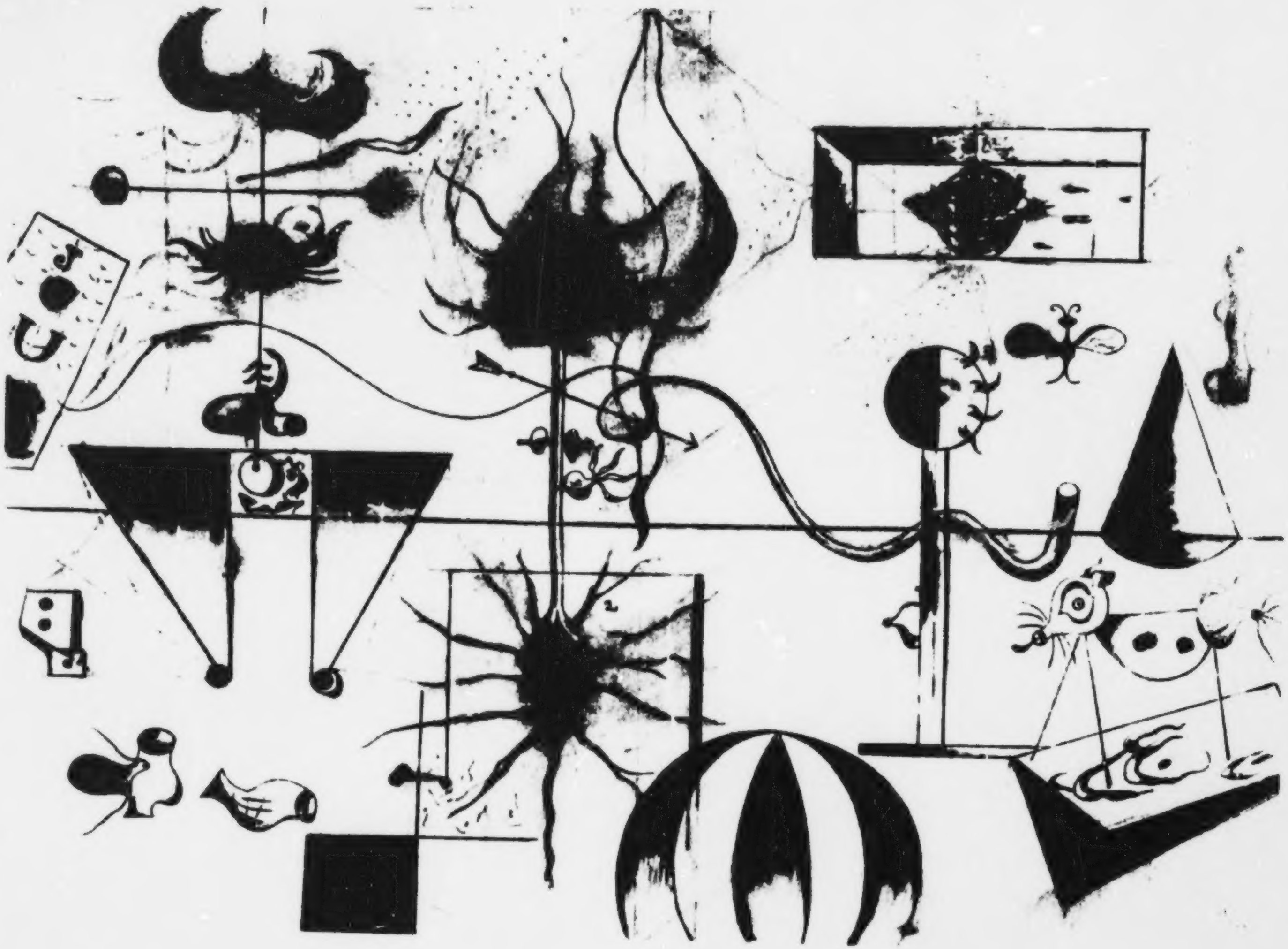

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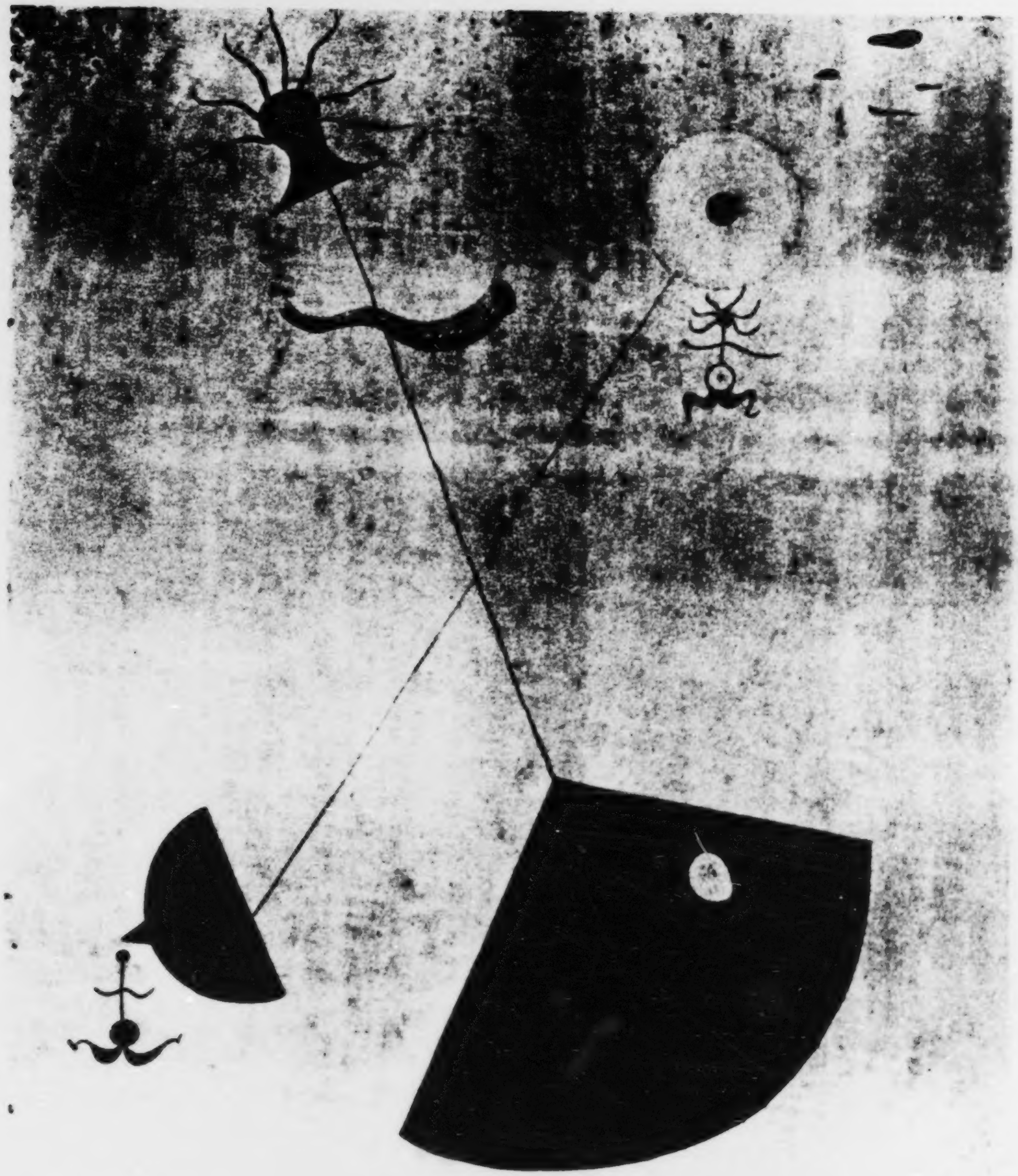

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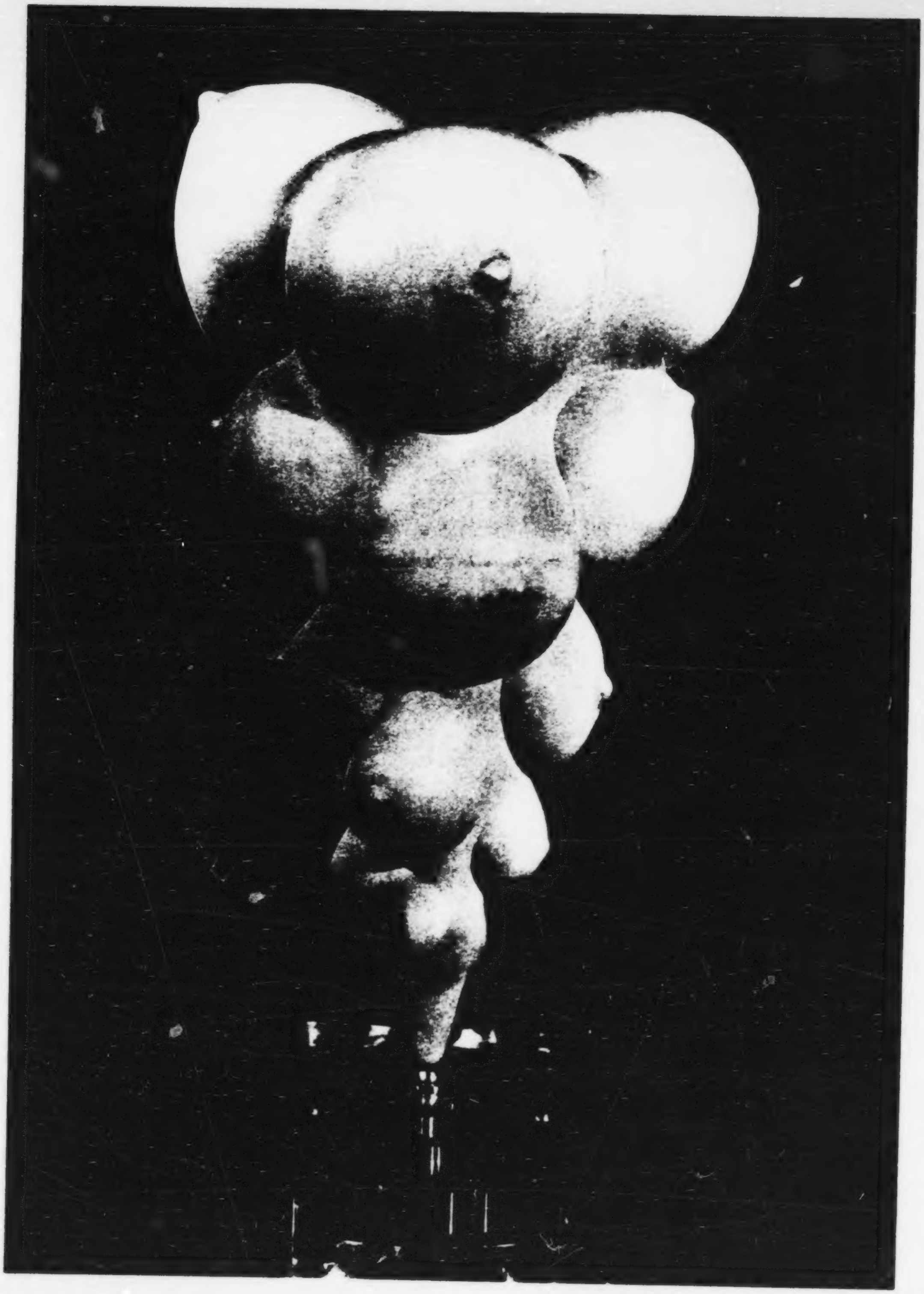


Fig. 38. Bellmer.

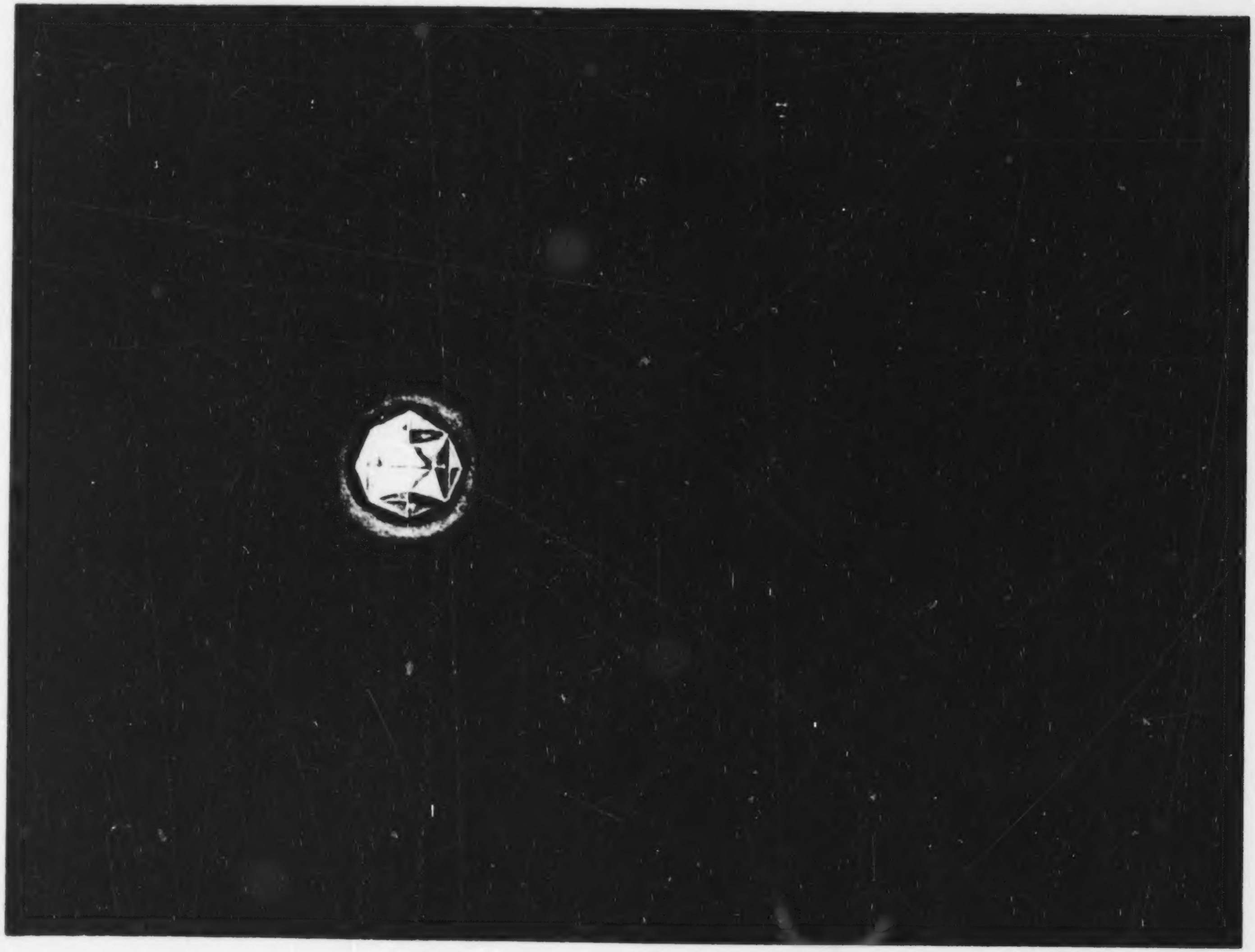


Fig. 39. Brauner.

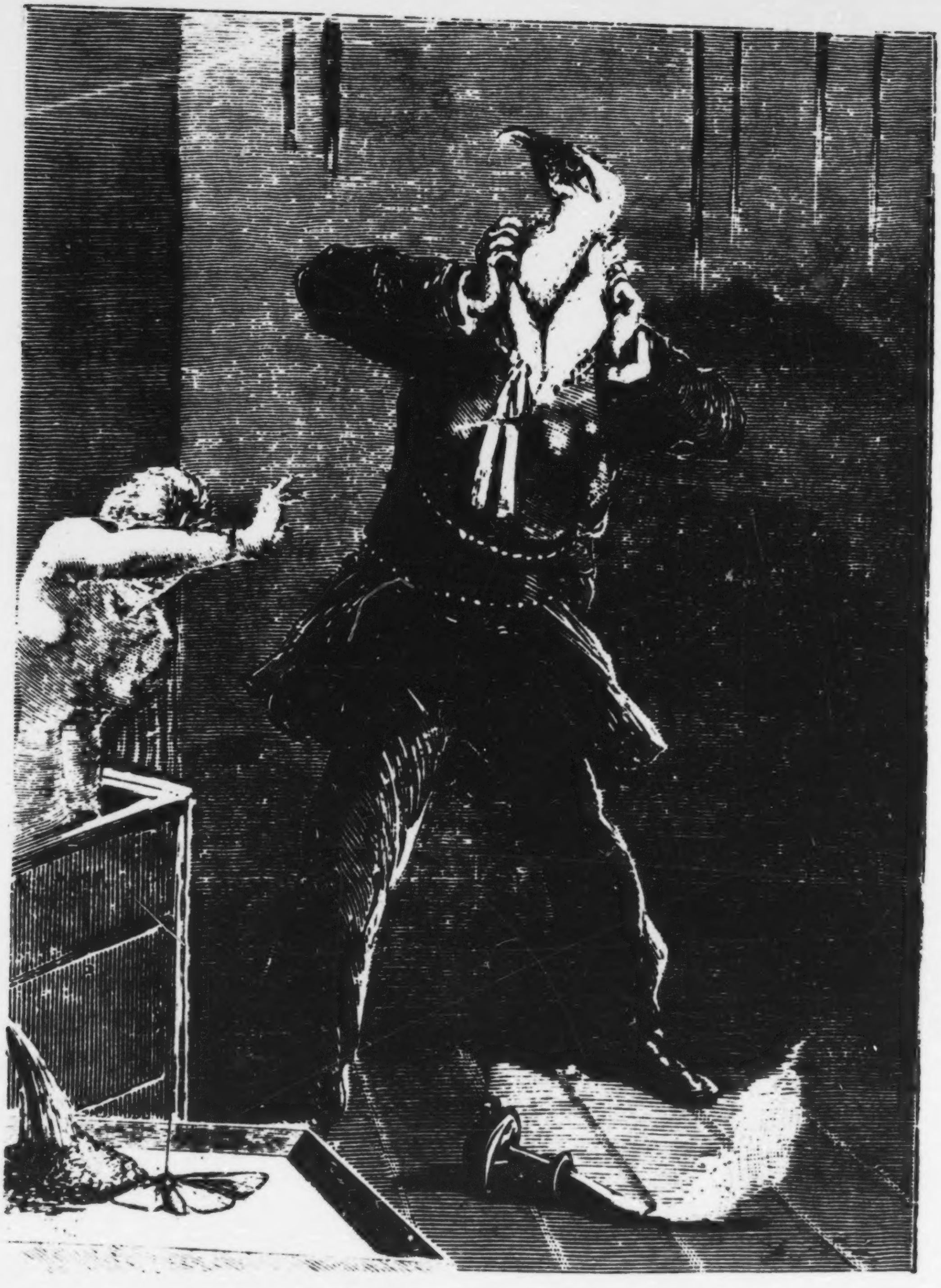
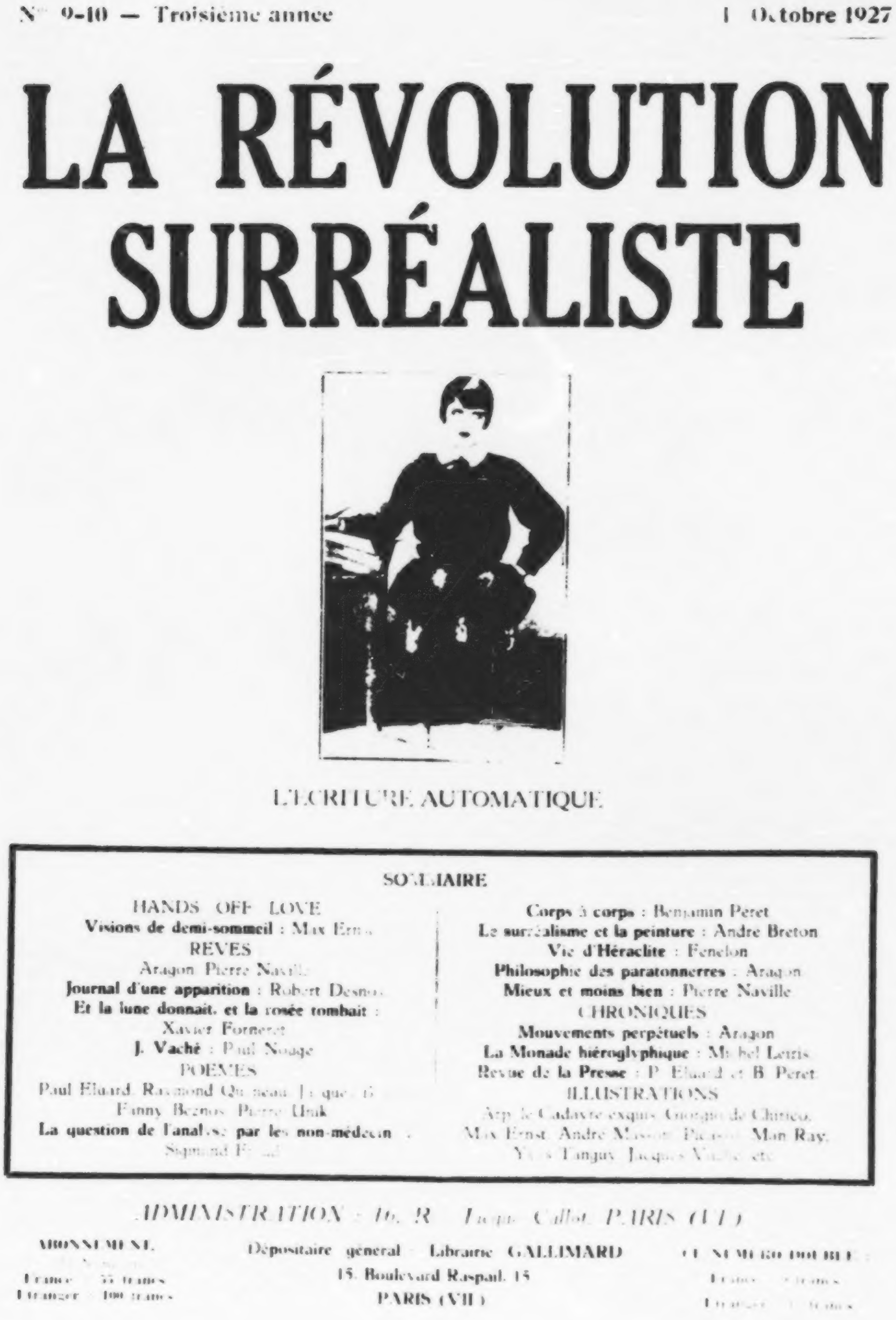


Fig. 40. Ernst.

Fig. 41. Ray.



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L'ÉCRITURE AUTOMATIQUE

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Étranger : 100 francs

Dépositaire général : Librairie GALLIMARD
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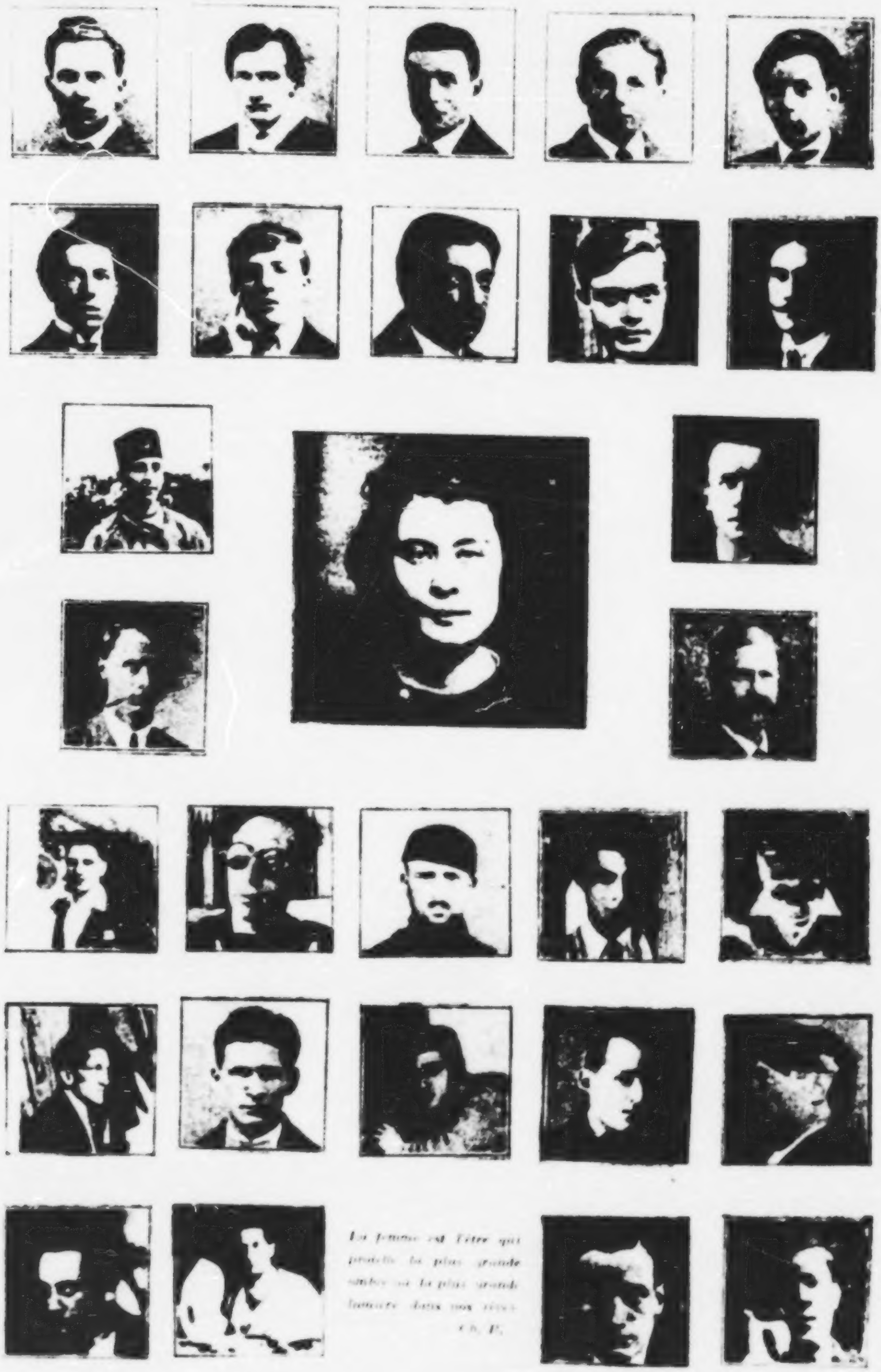
Fig. 42. Anonymous.

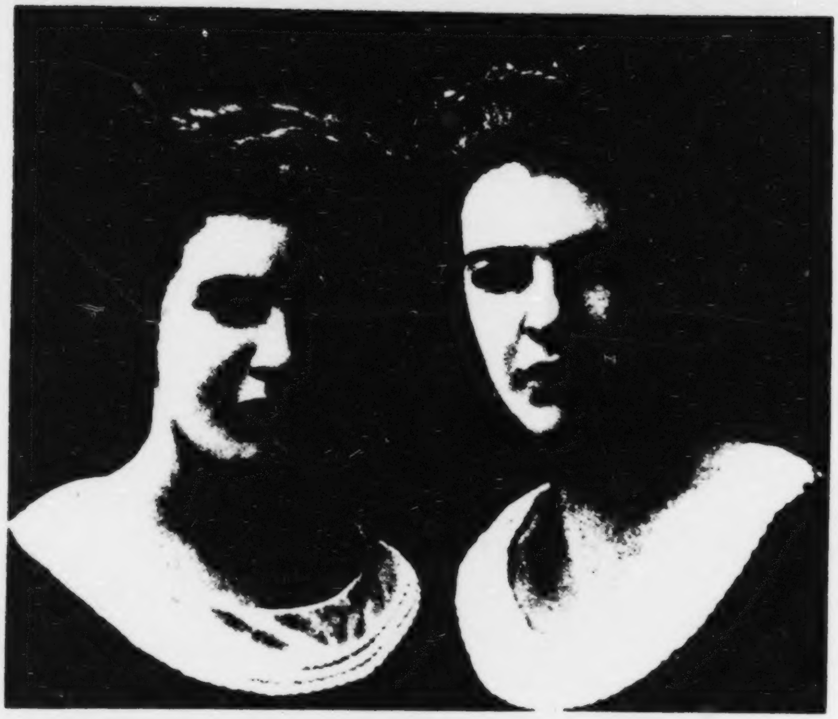


La femme est l'être qui projette la plus grande ombre ou la plus grande lumière dans nos rêves.

Ch. B.

Fig. 43. Anonymous.

AVANT



APRES

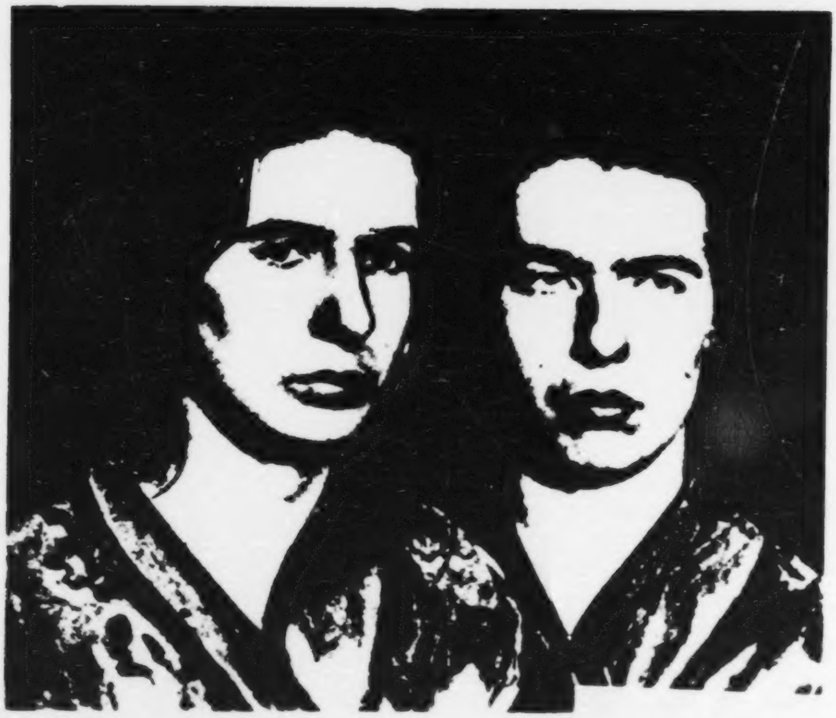
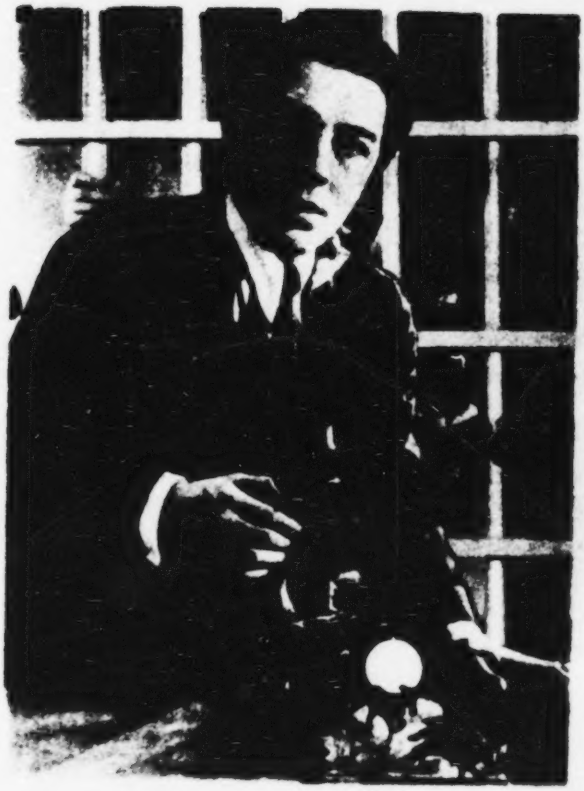


Fig. 44. Anonymous.



L'écriture

automatiqu

Fig. 45. Breton.

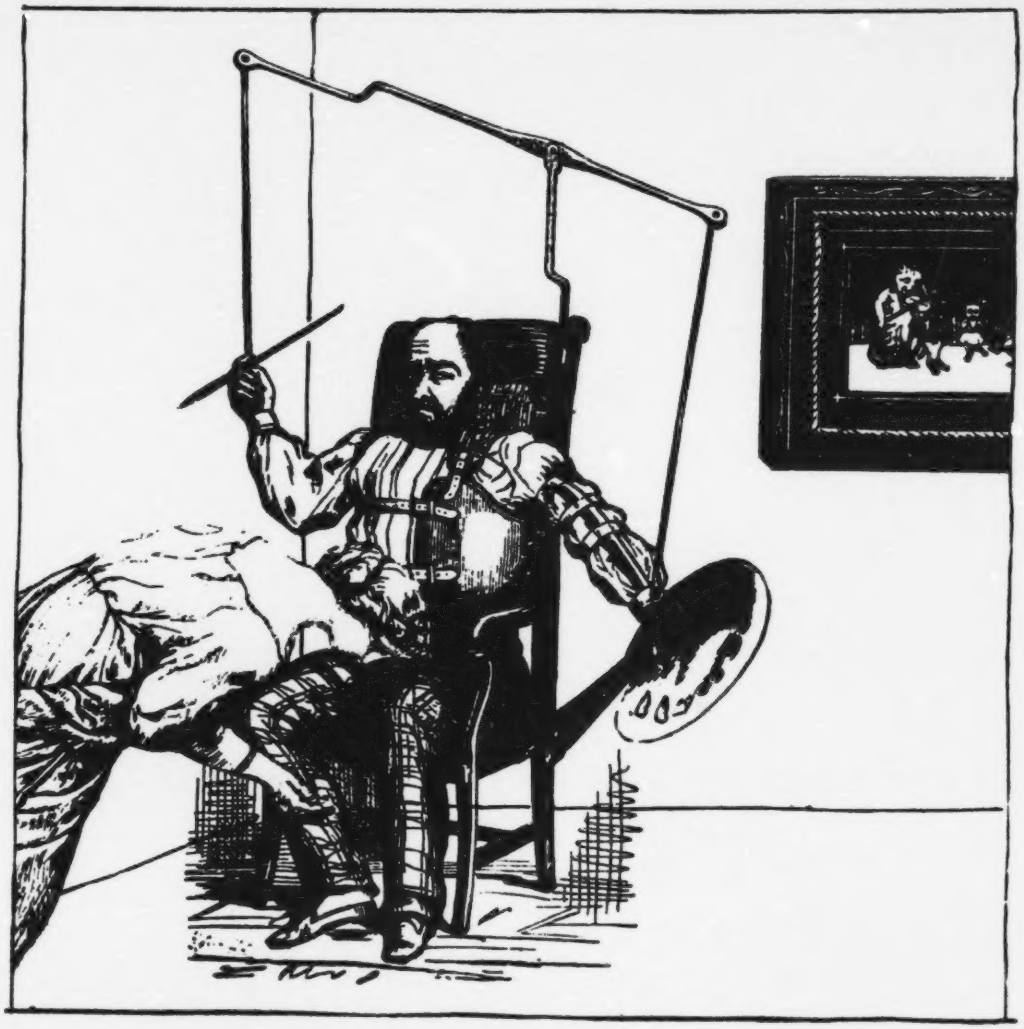
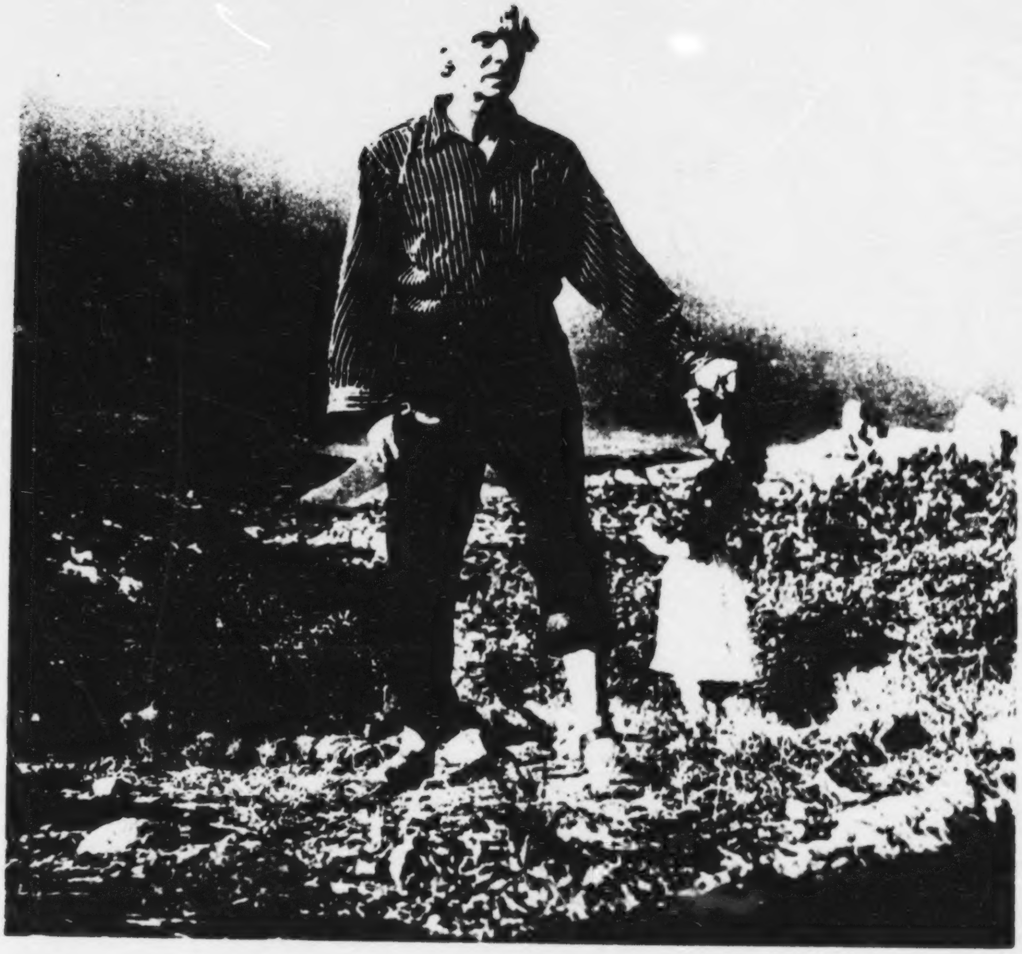


Fig. 46. Ernst.



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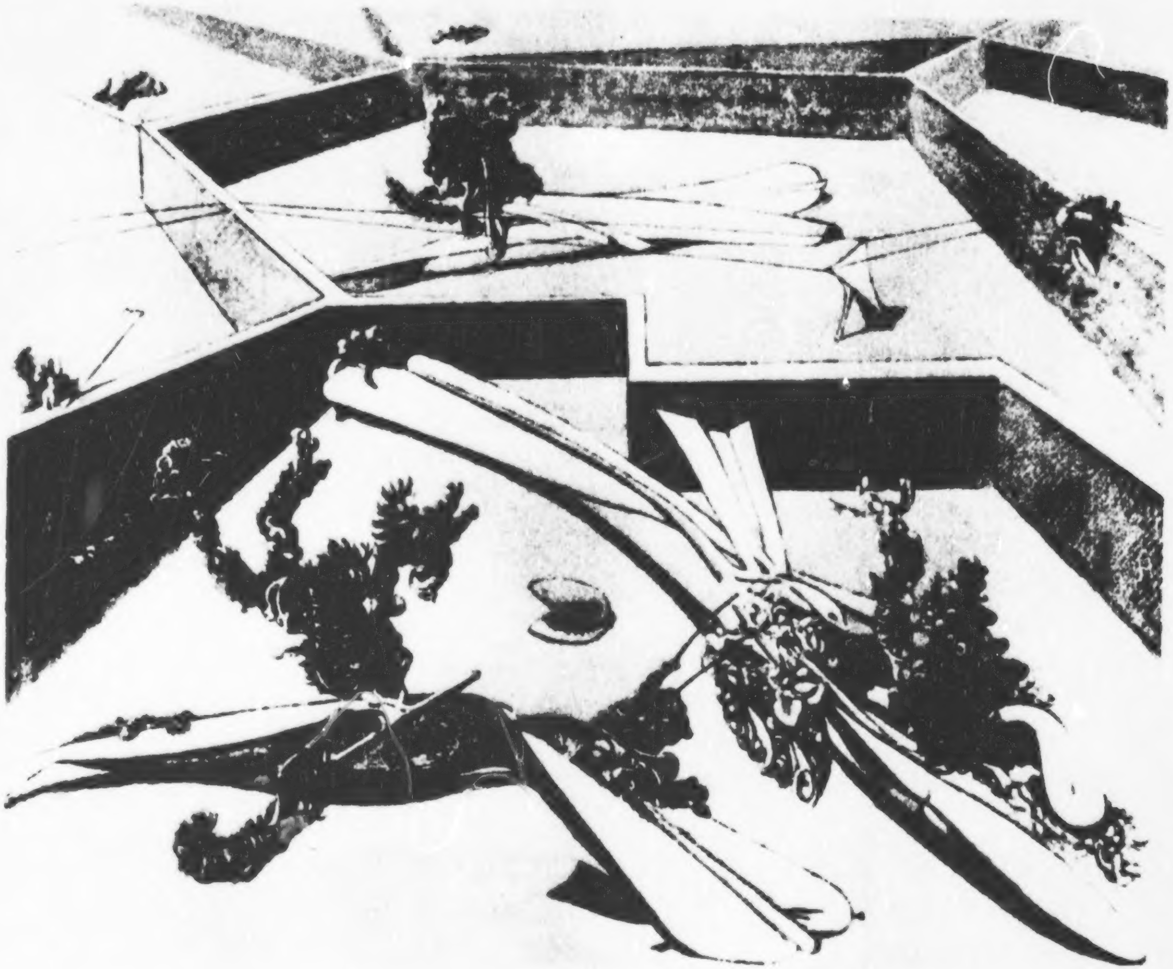

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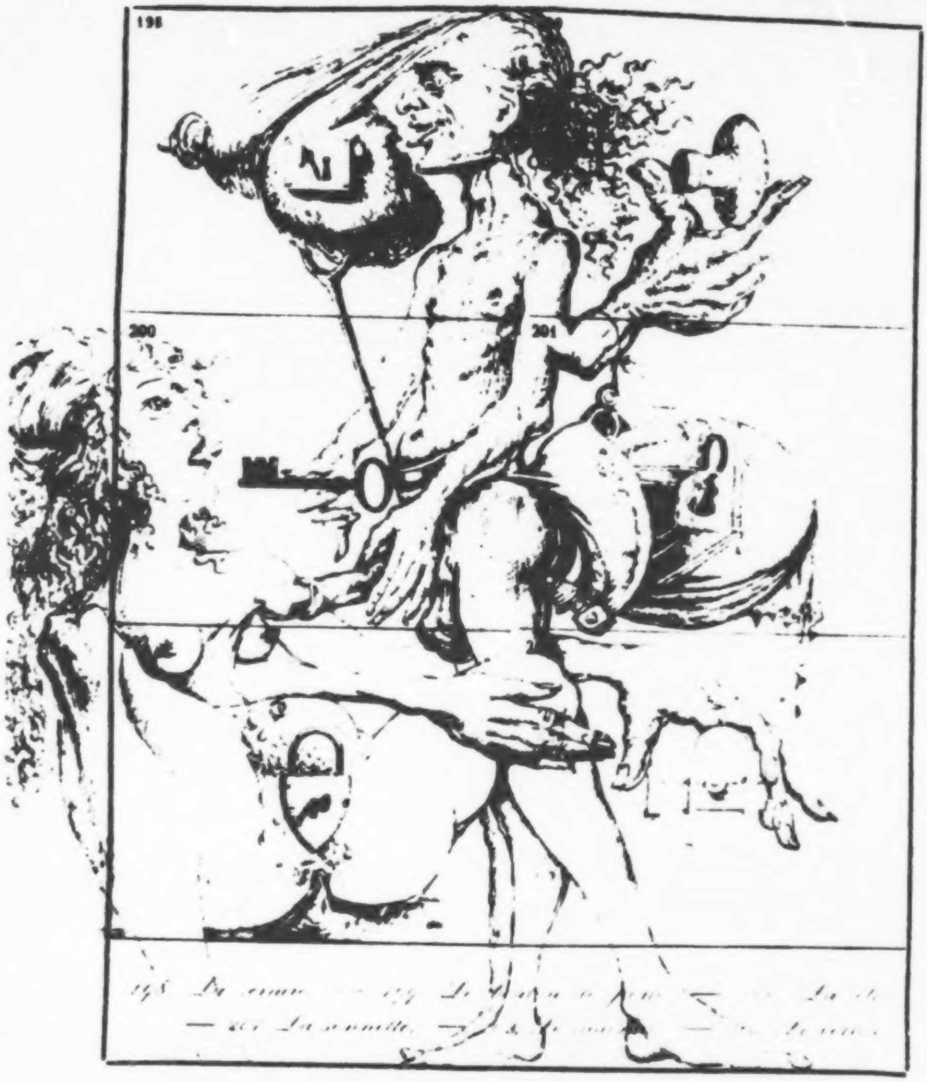

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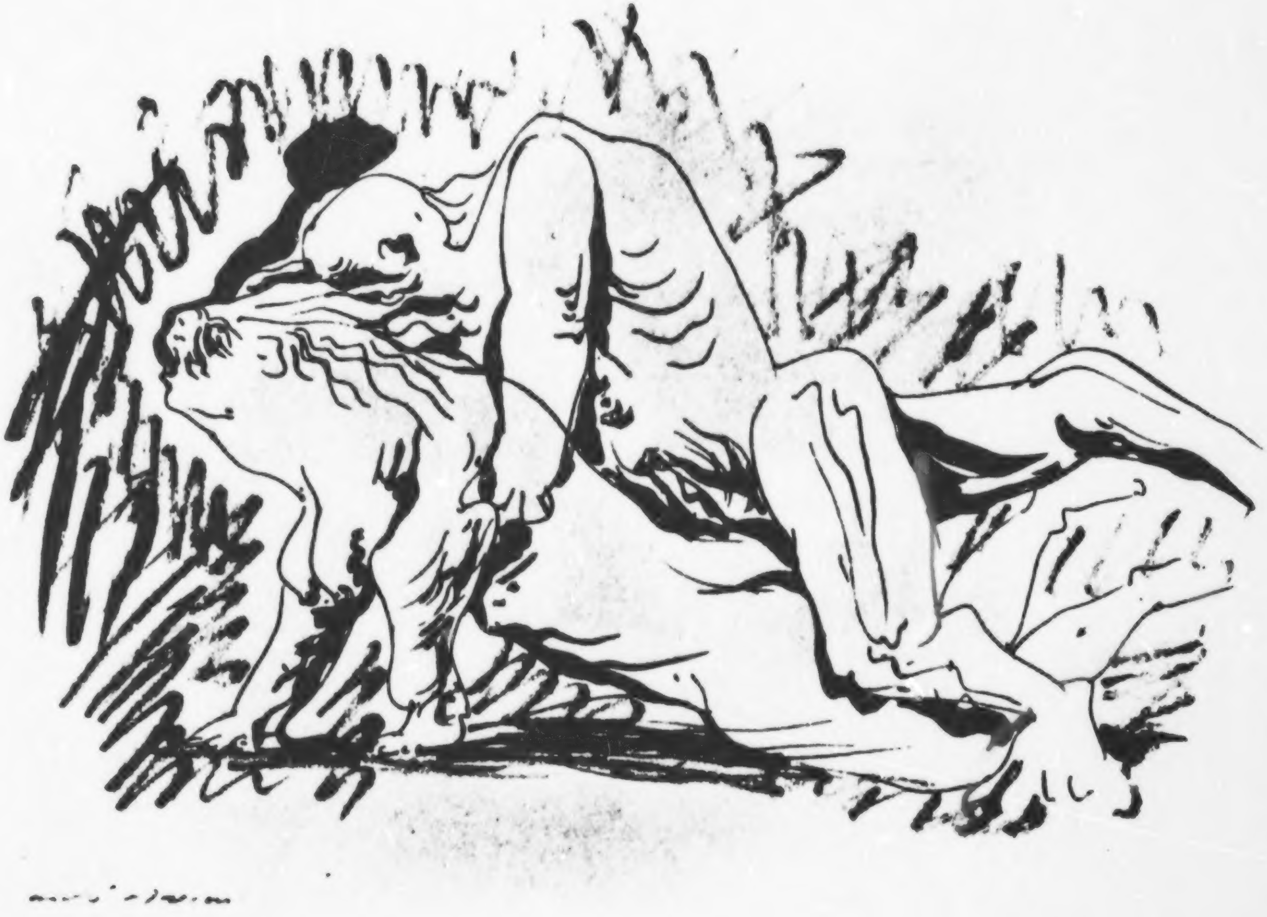

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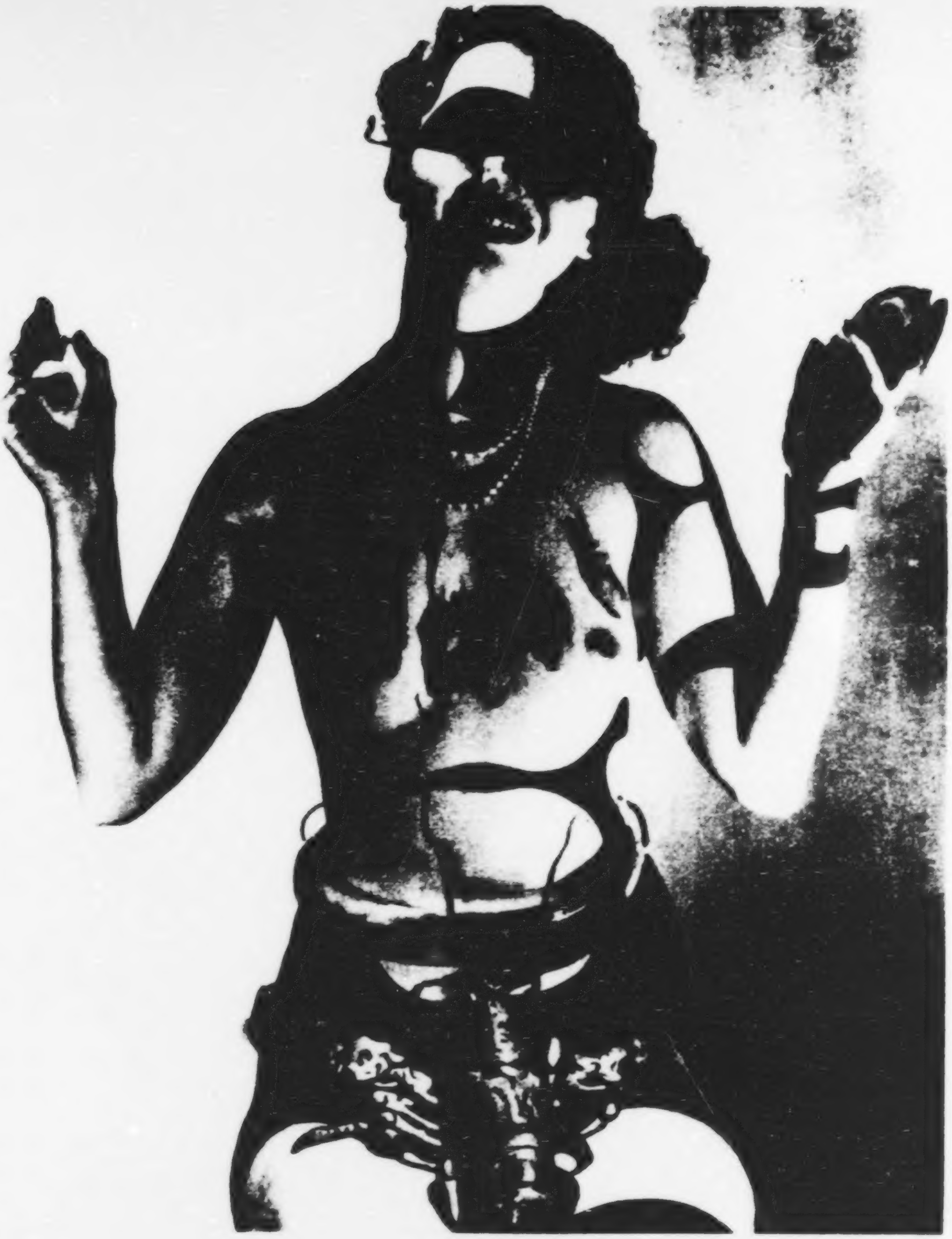

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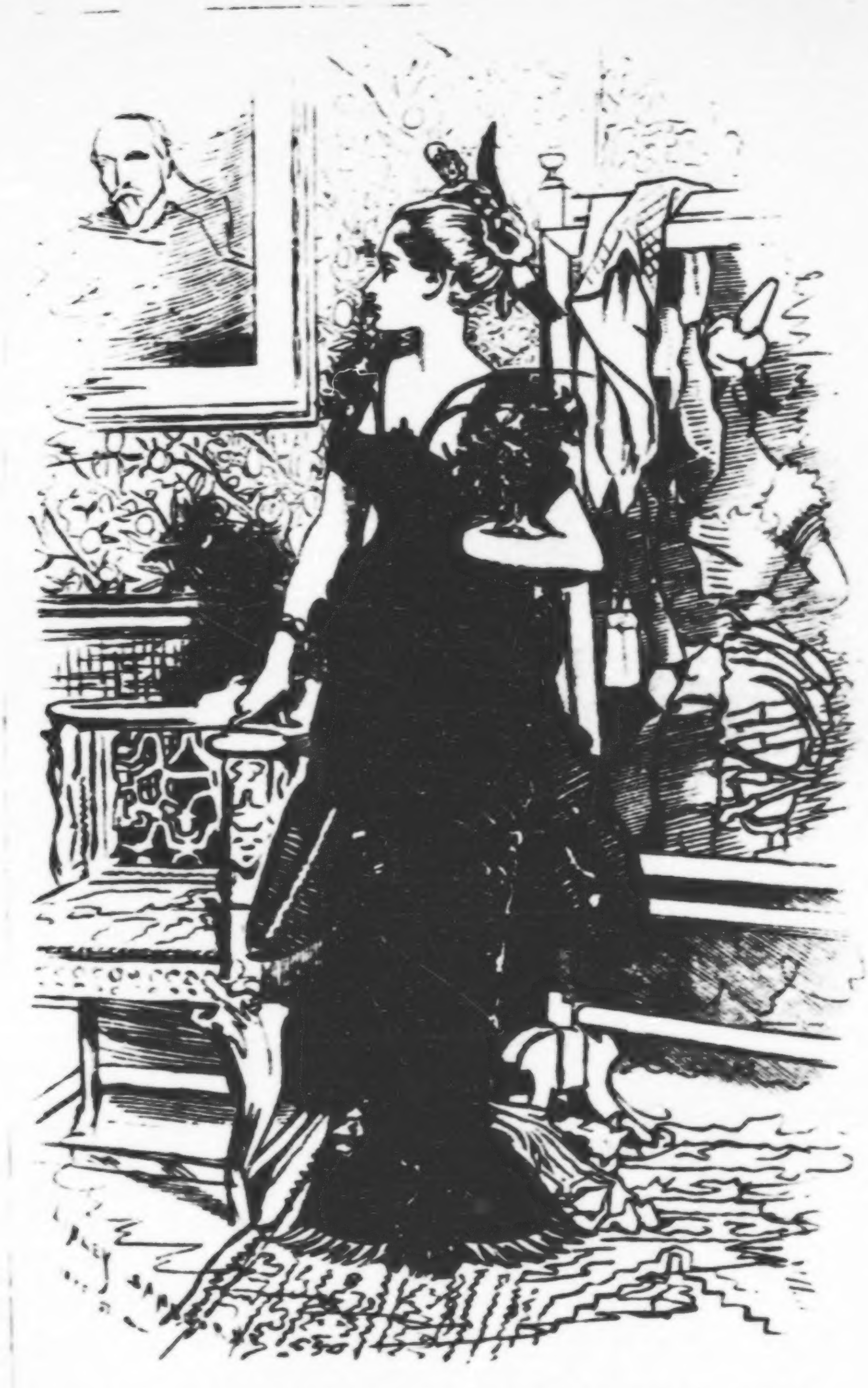
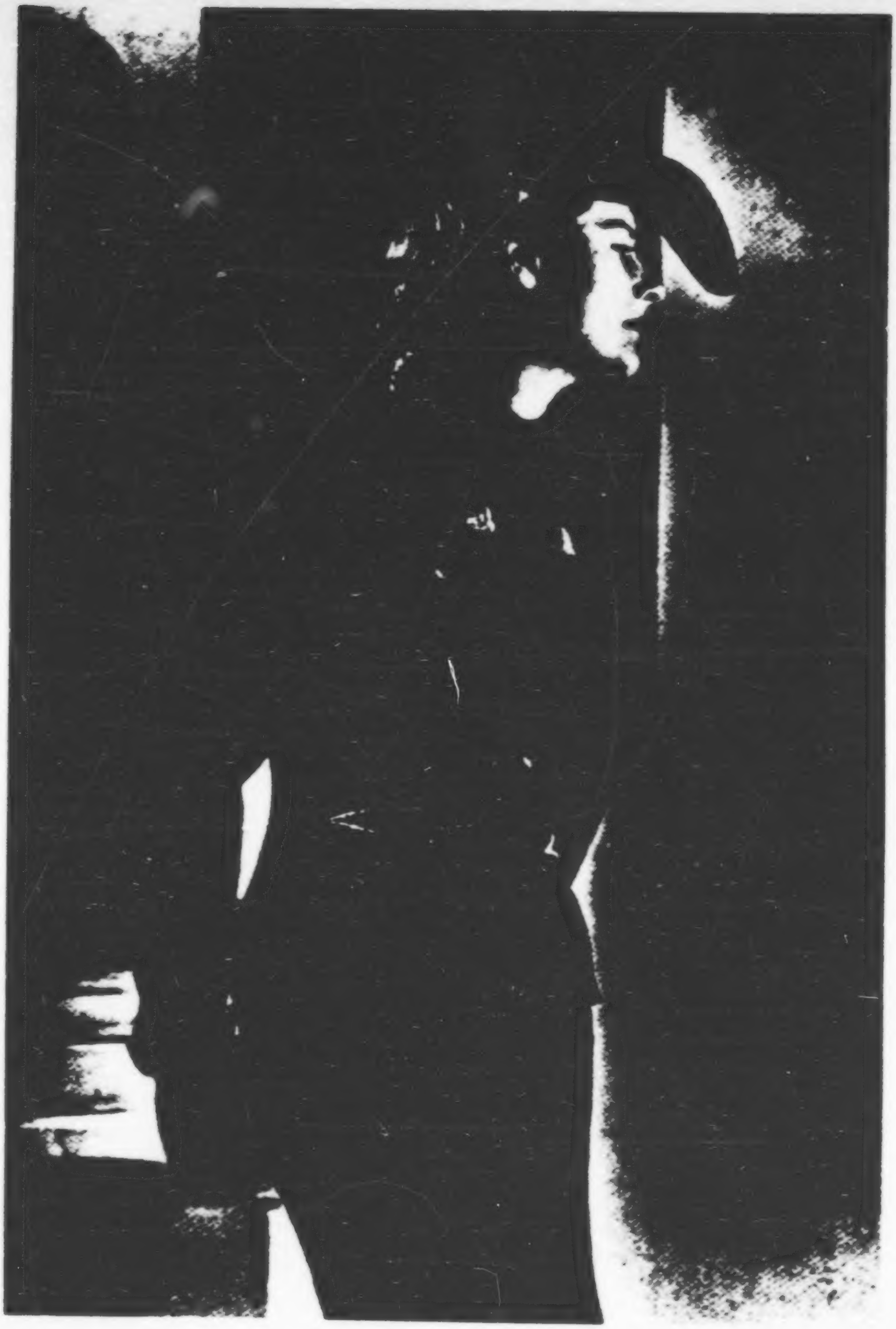


MR. PUNCH'S DRESS DESIGNS (AFTER NATURE).

Costume du Soir—Robe en Homard.

[*A Suggestion for Tight Dresses.*

Fig. 52. Sambourne.



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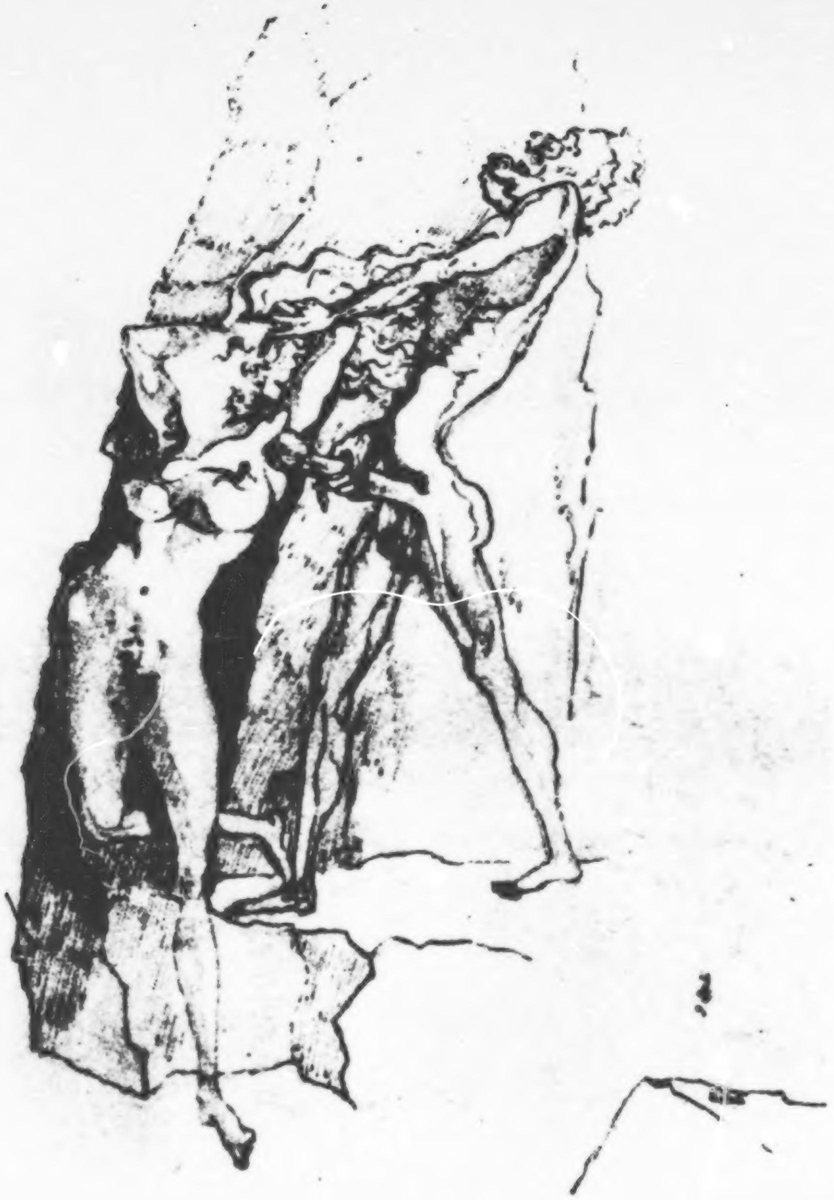

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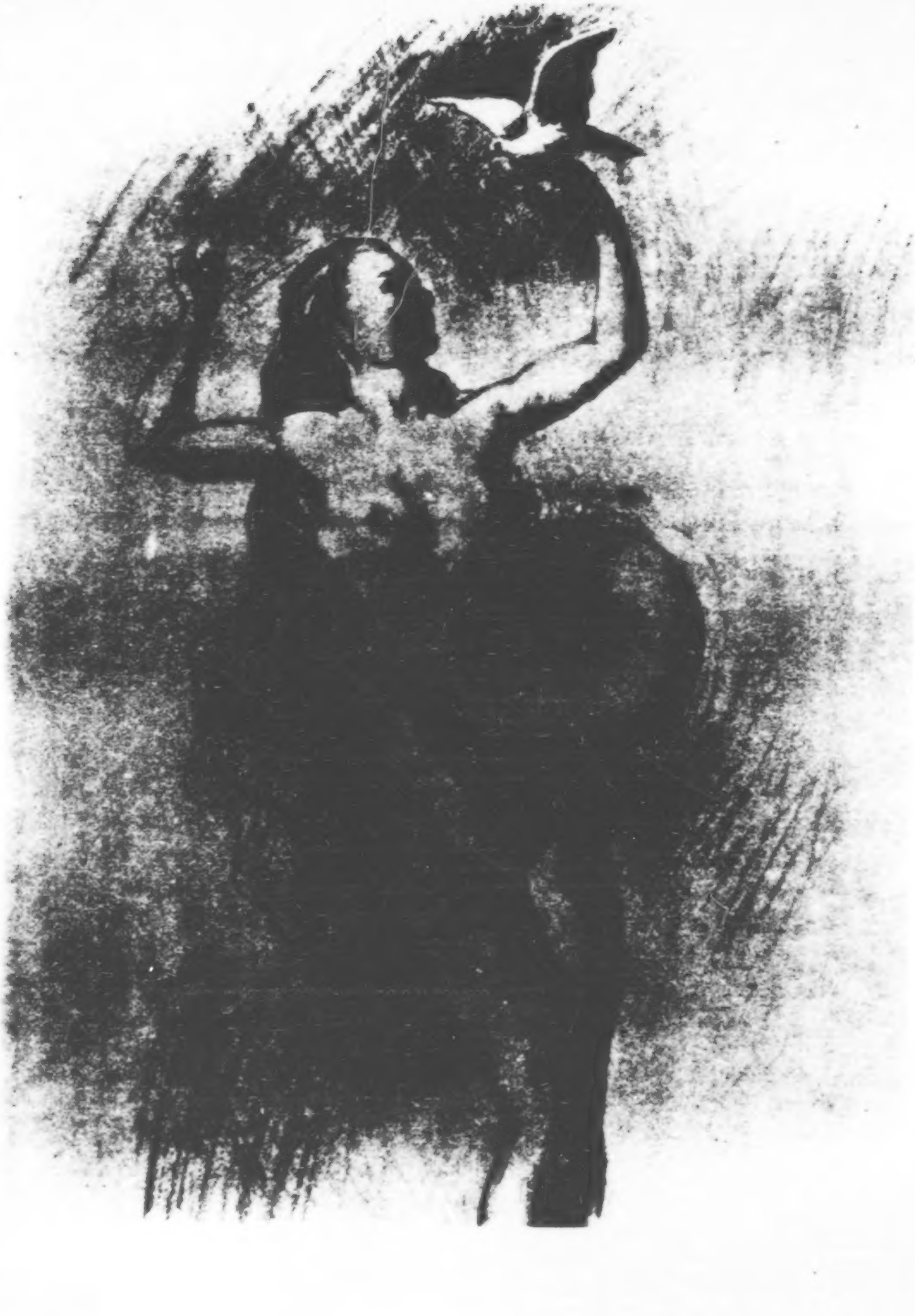
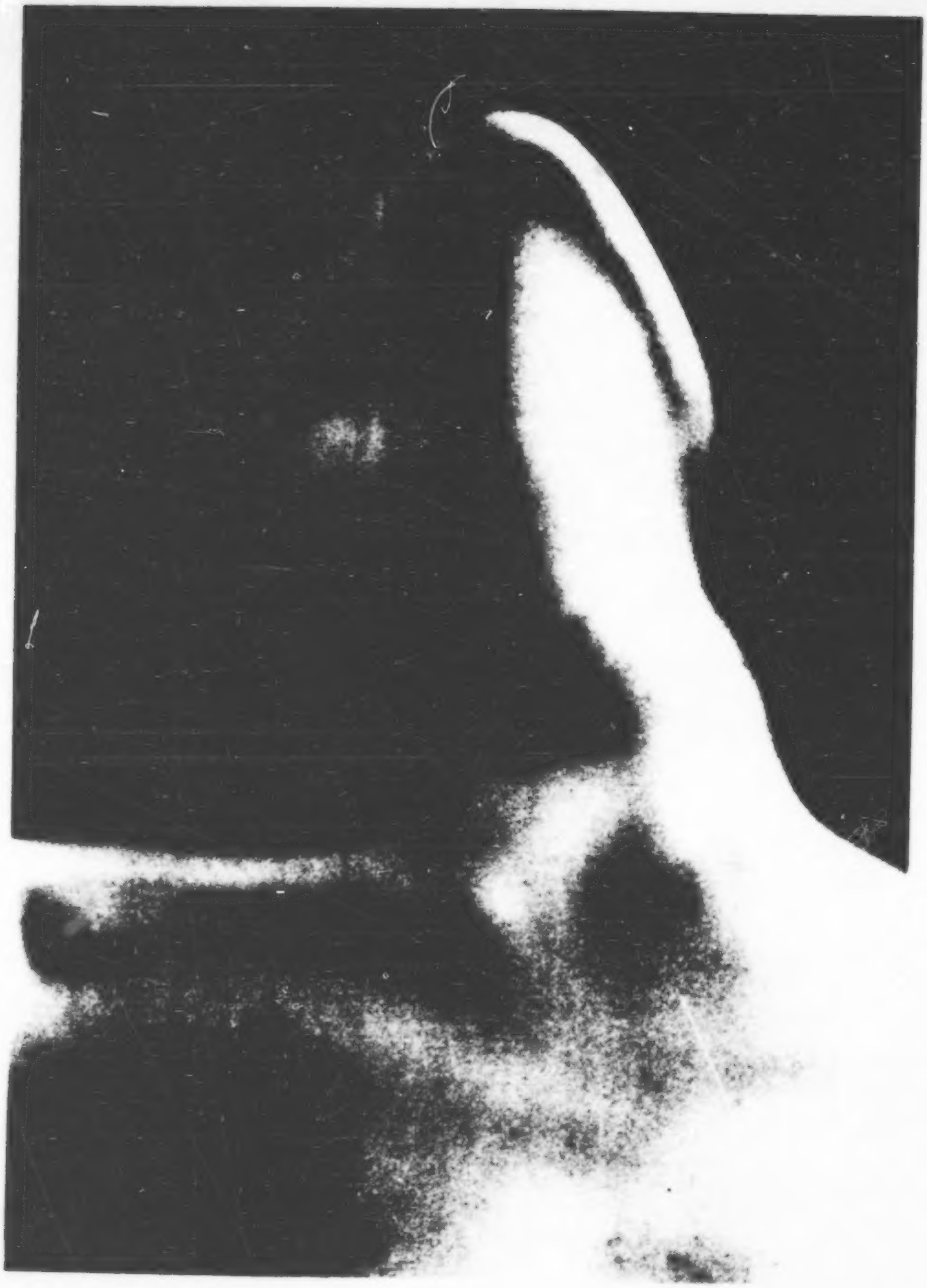


Fig. 56. Magritte.



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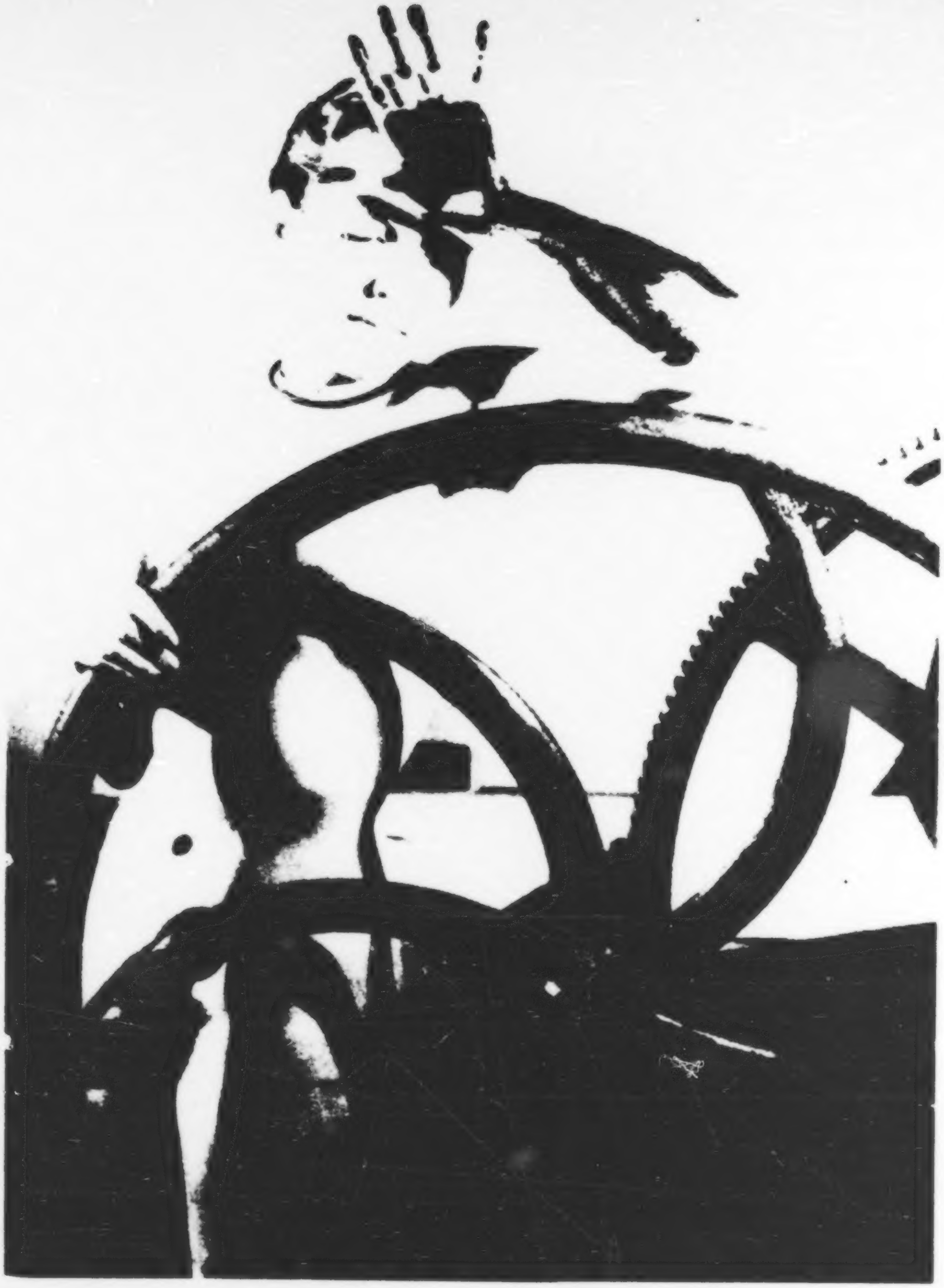

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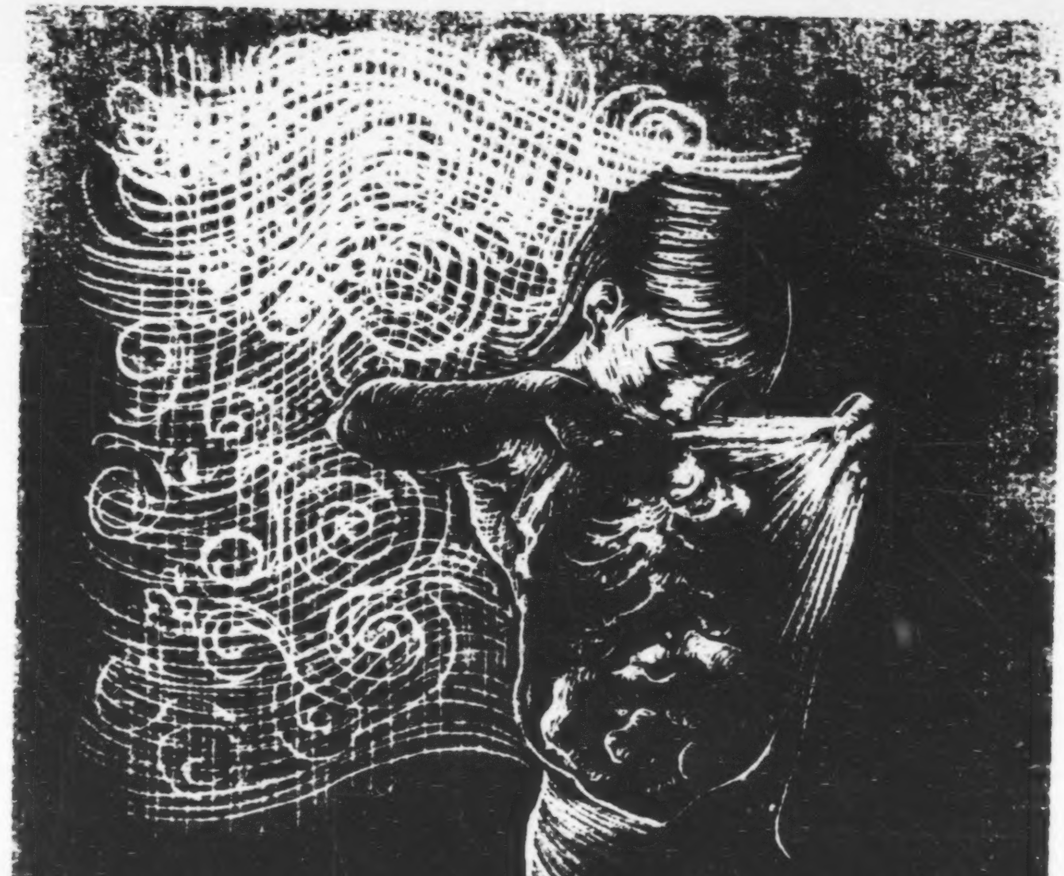

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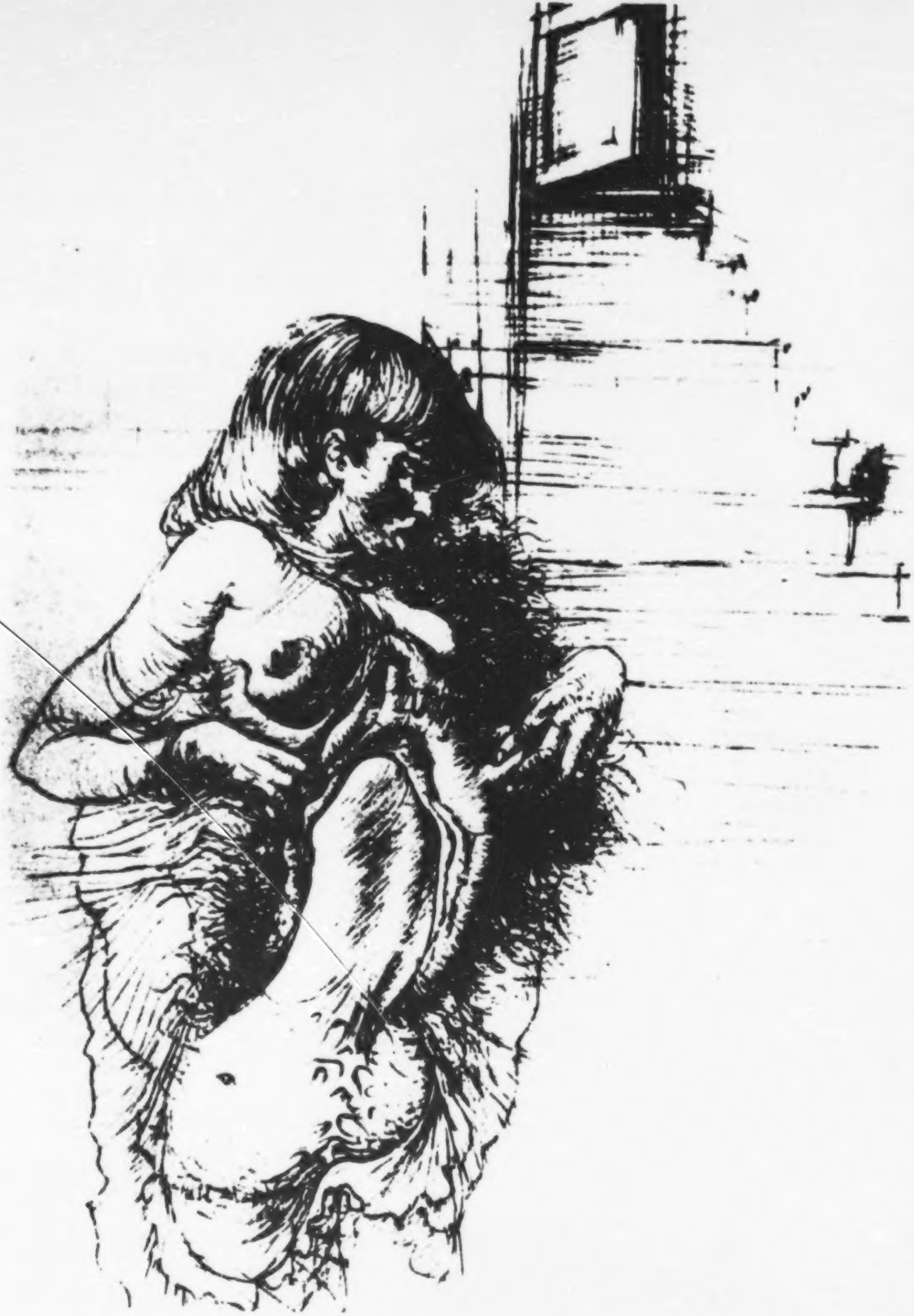

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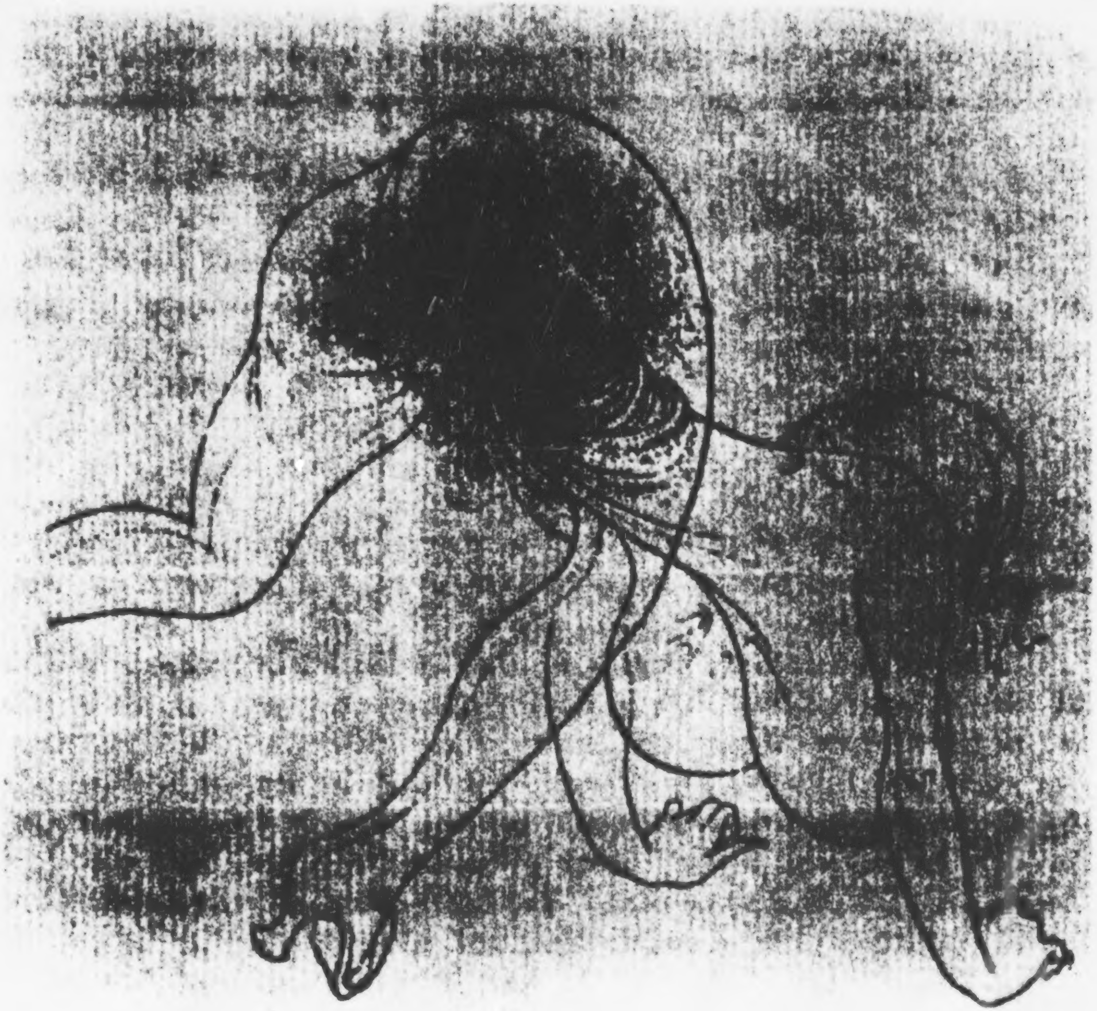
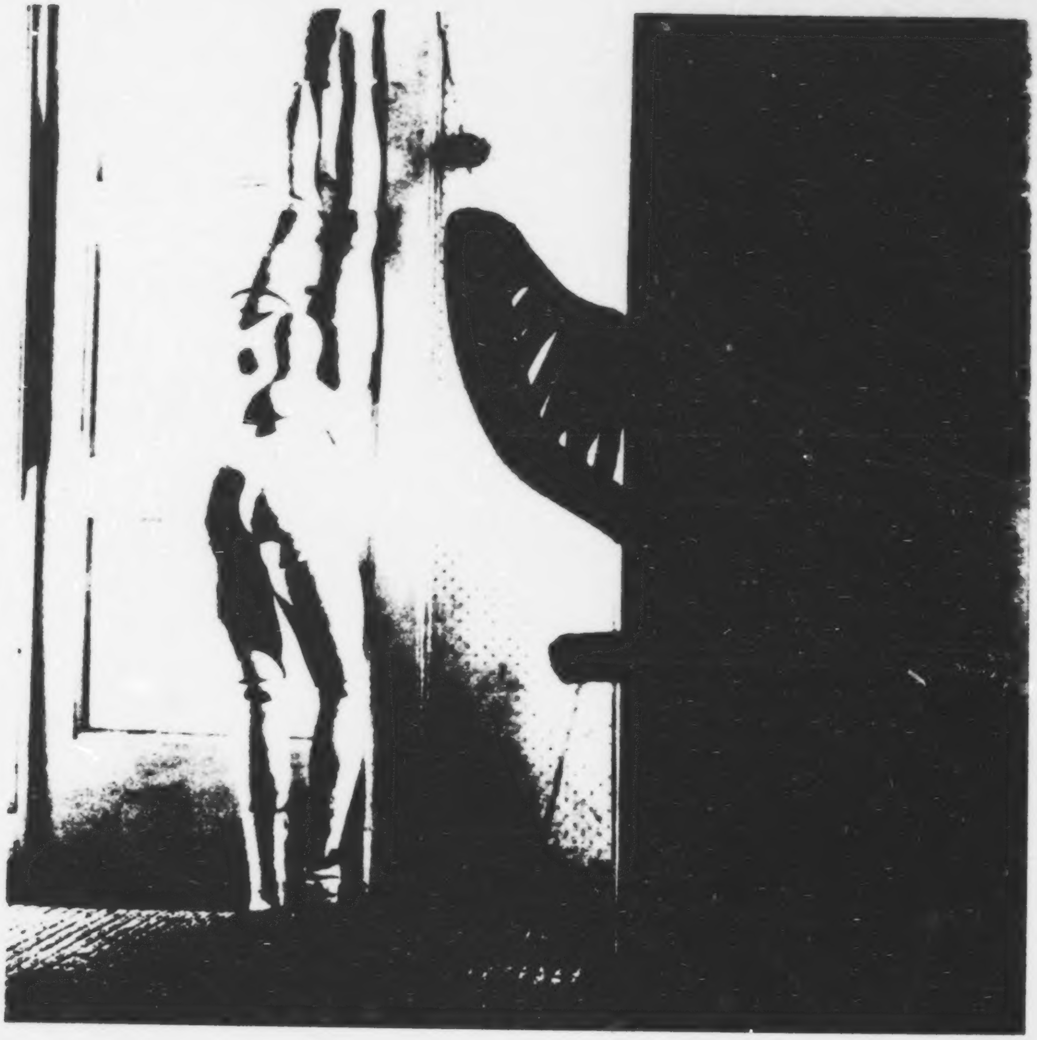


Fig. 62. Bellmer.

Fig. 63. Bellmer.



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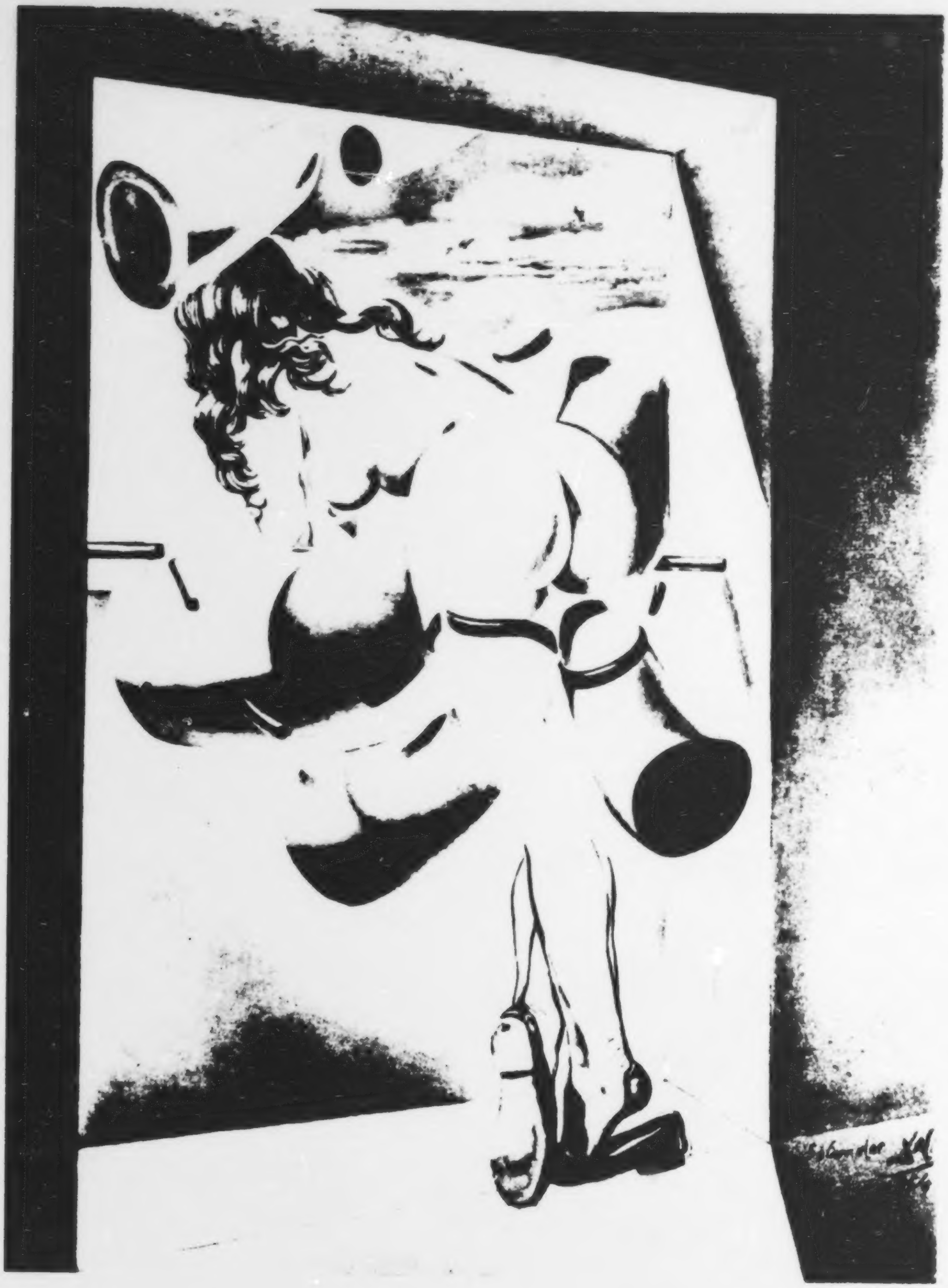


Fig. 65. Dalí.

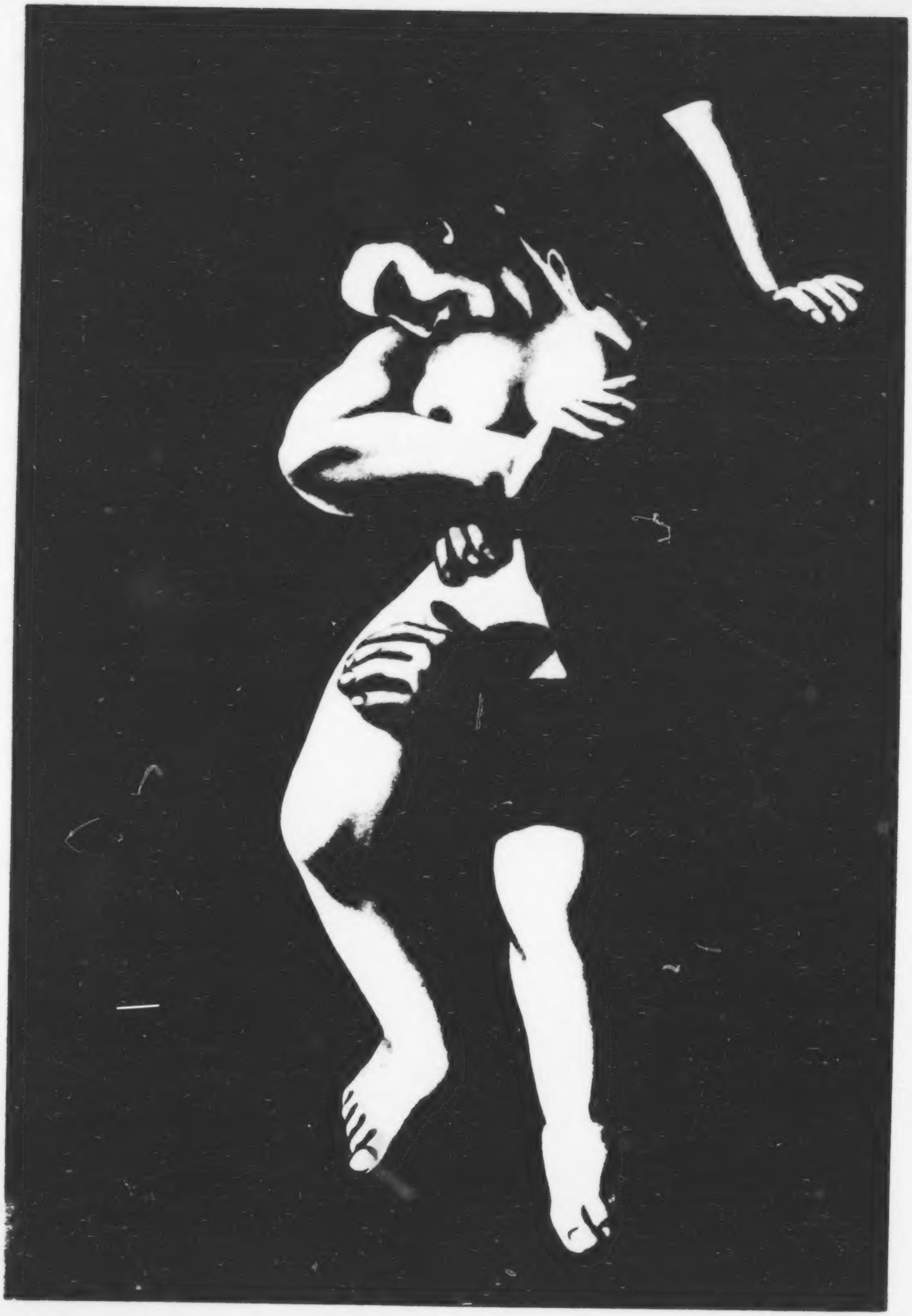


Fig. 66. Magritte.

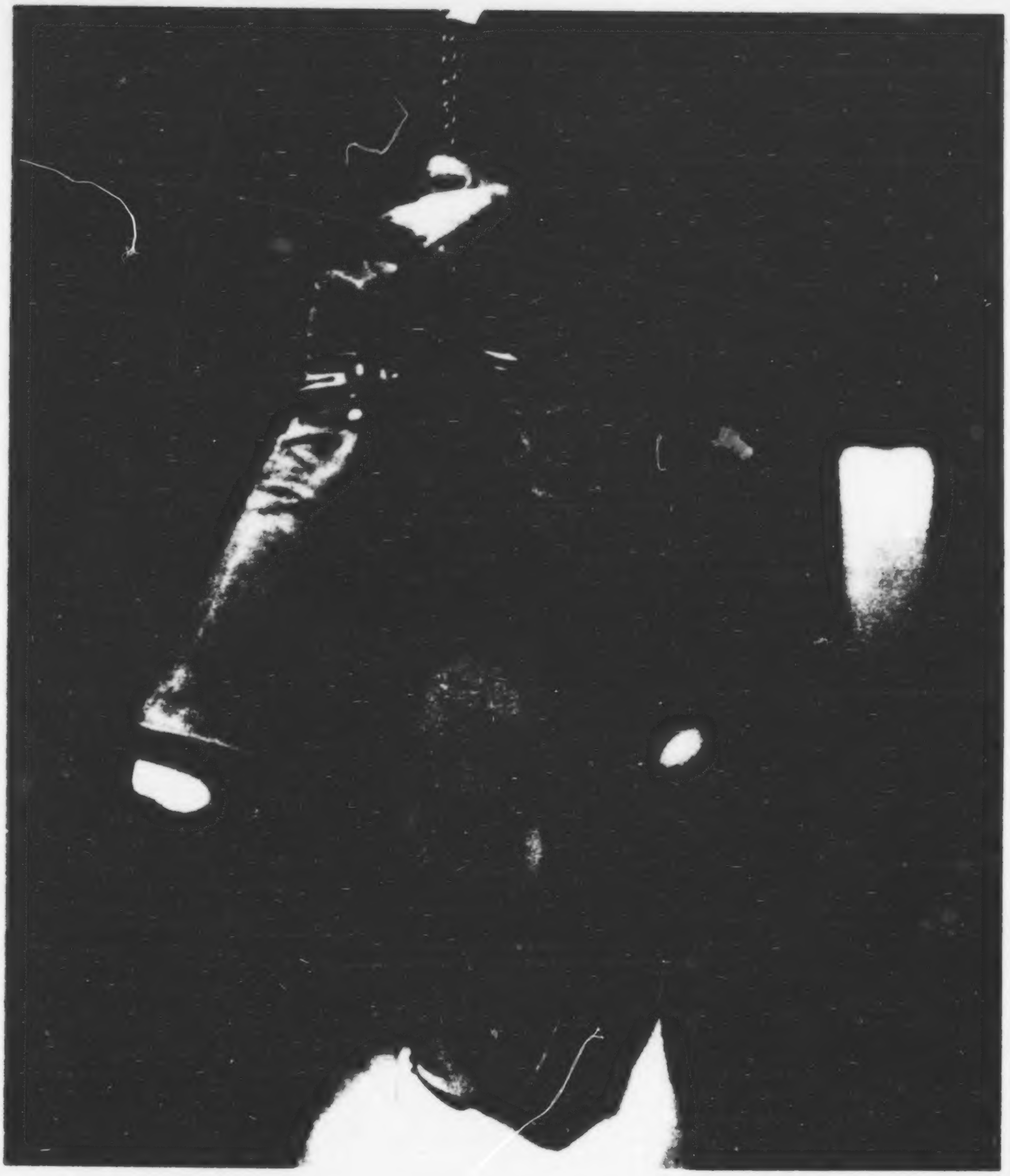


Fig. 67. Boiffard.

Fig. 68. Anonymous.

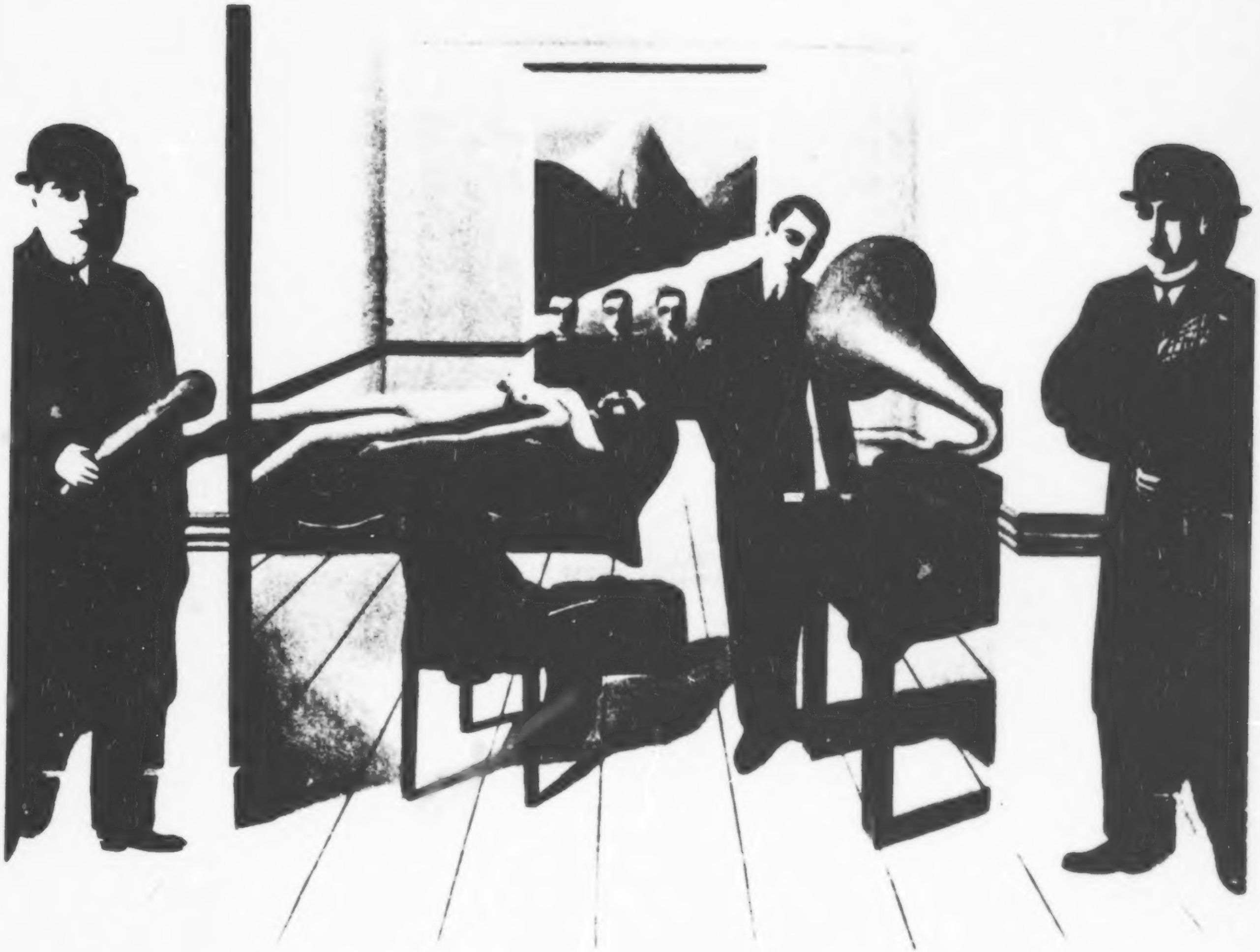


Fig. 69. Magritte.

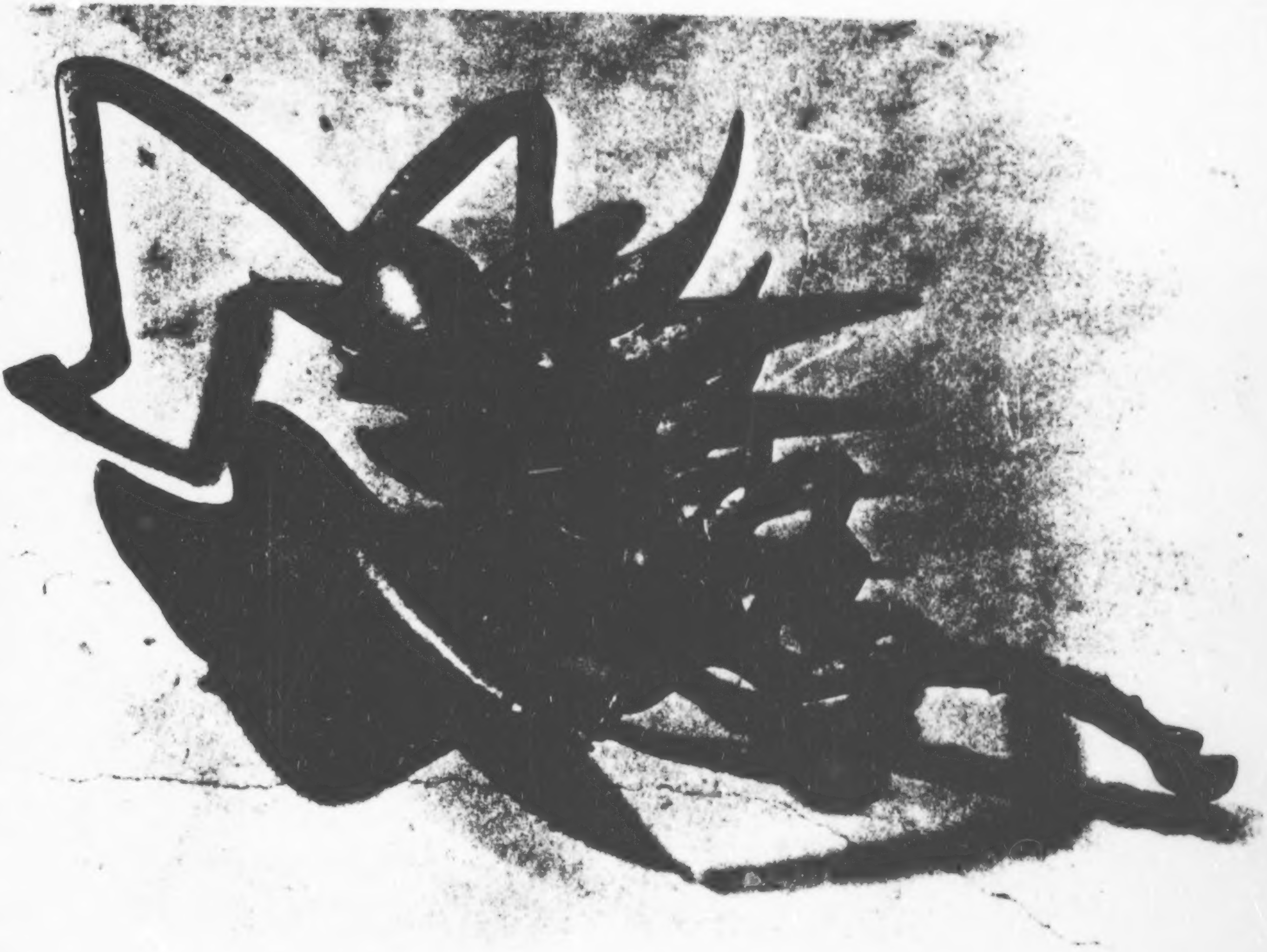


Fig. 70. Giacometti.

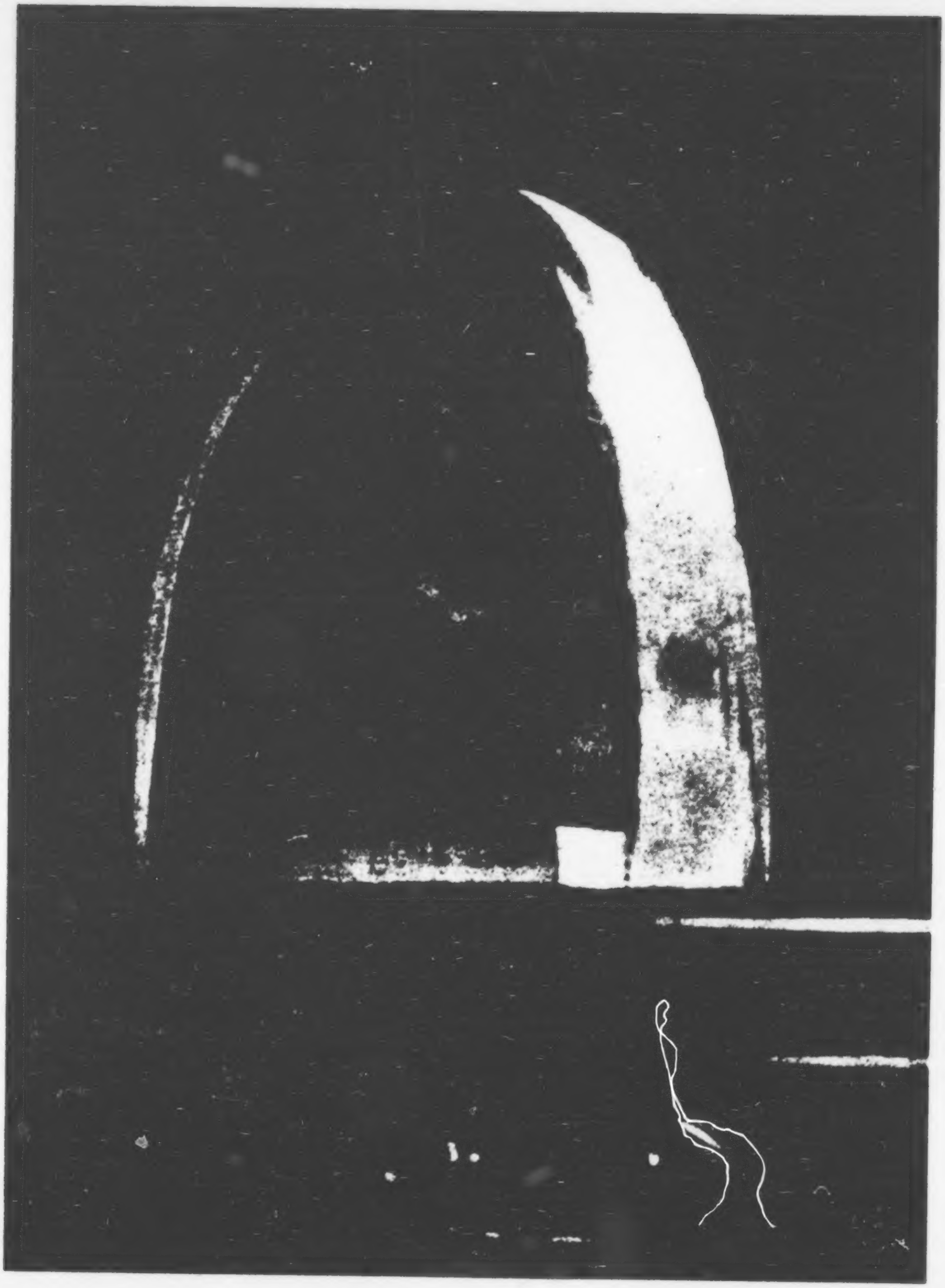


Fig. 71. Ray.

Fig. 72. Anonymous.

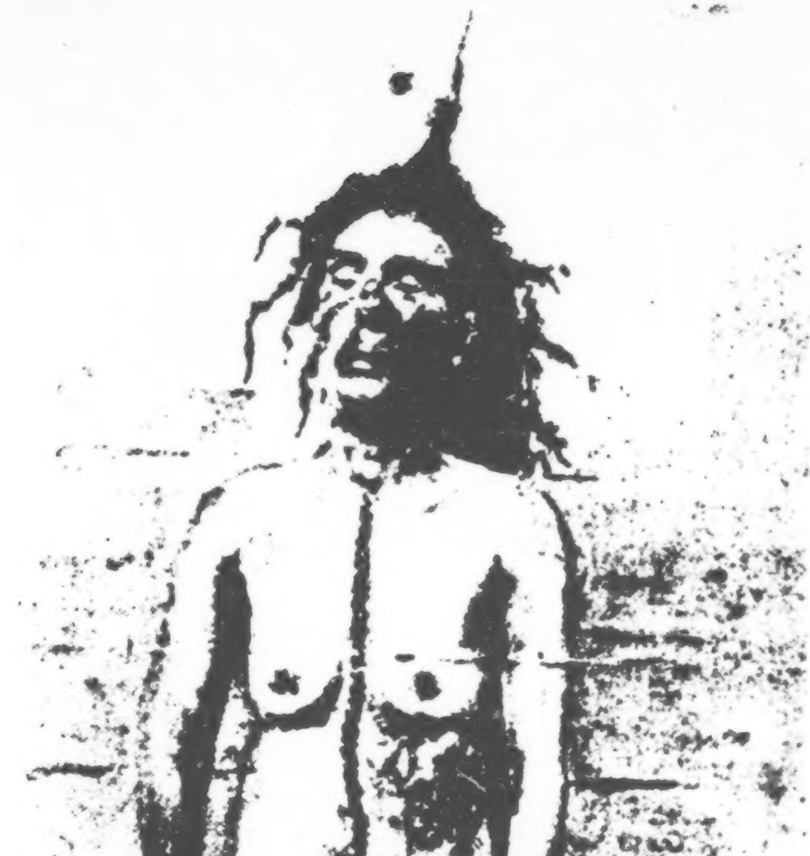


Fig. 73. Anonymous.

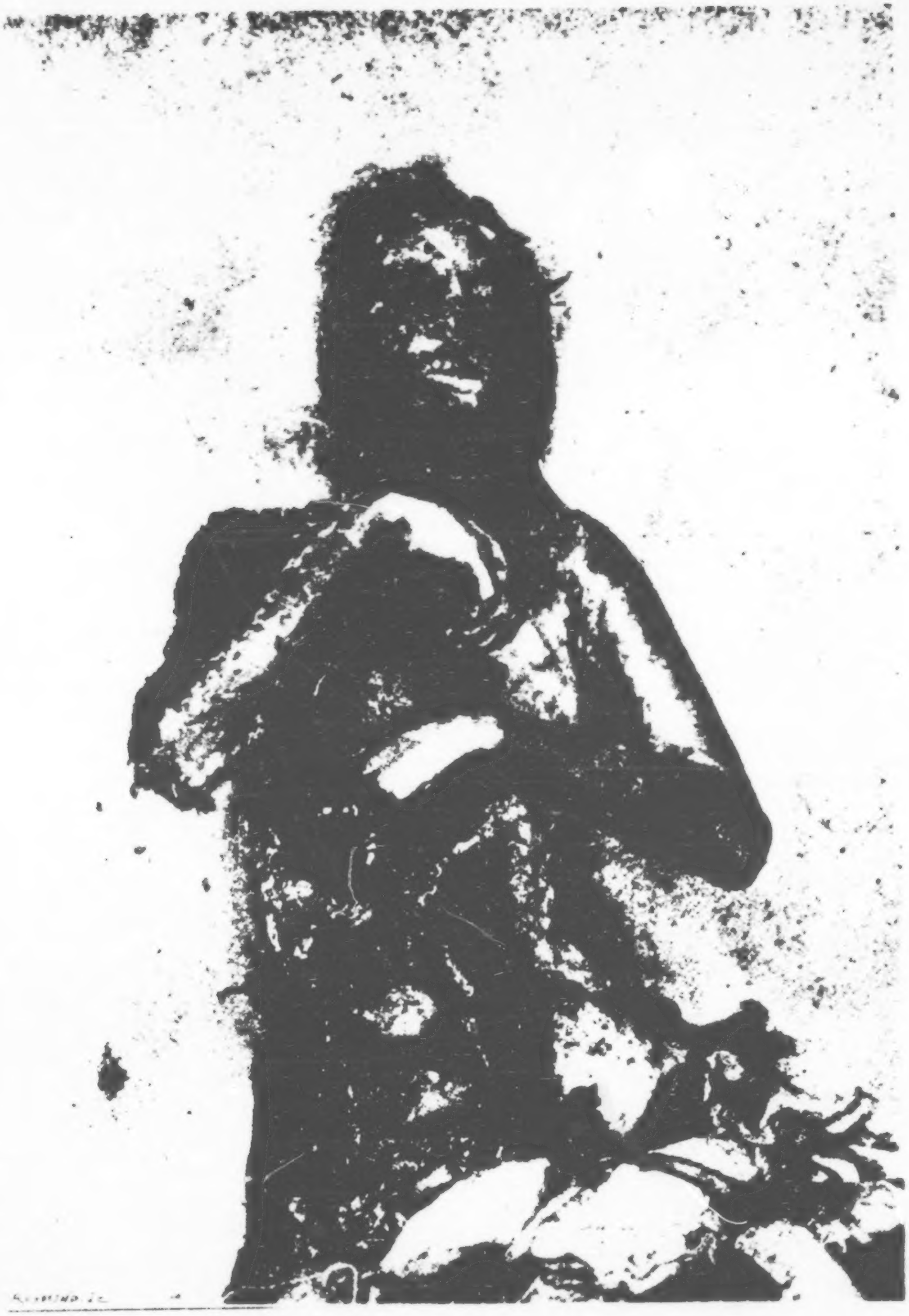


Fig. 74. Anonymous.

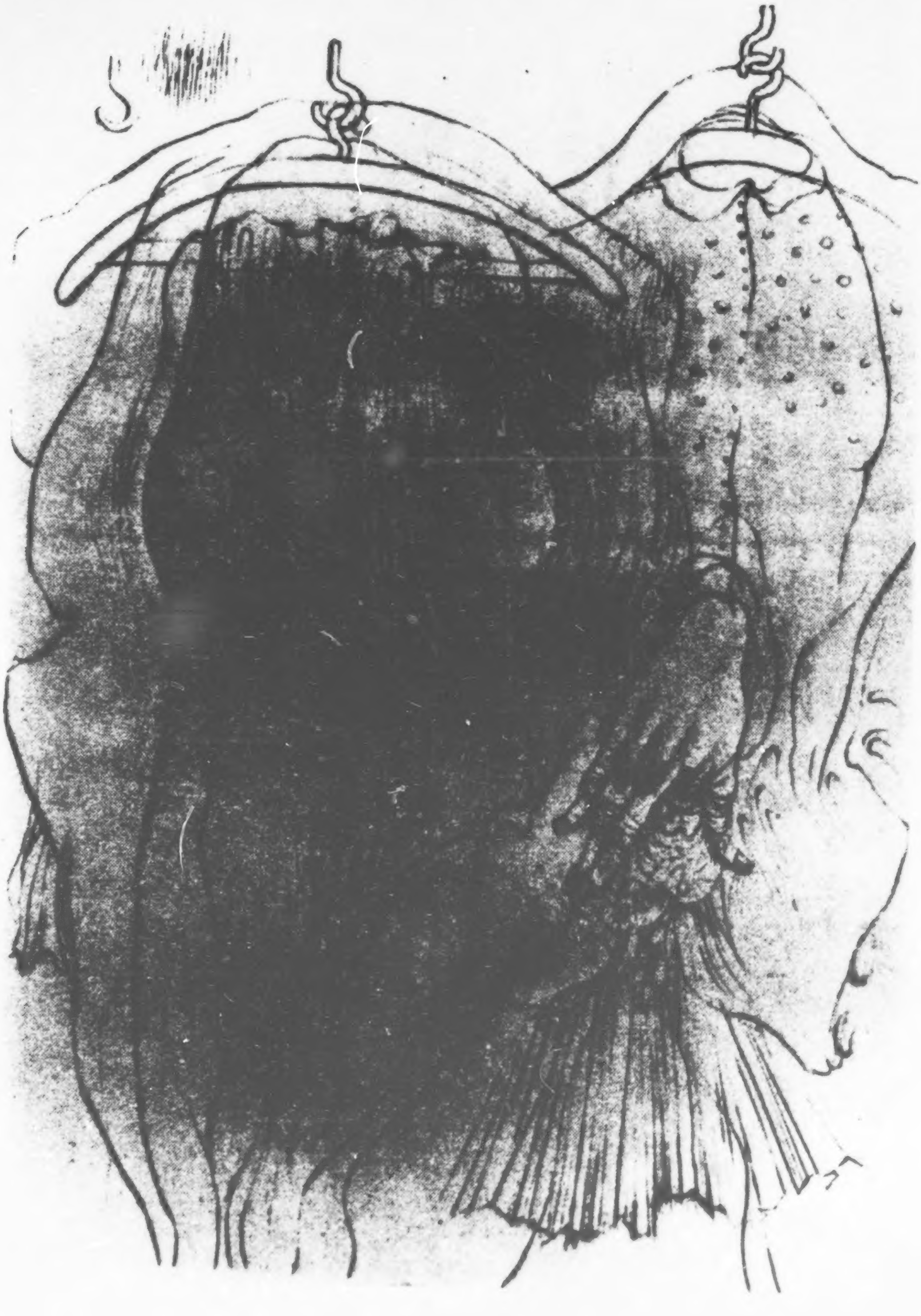


Fig. 75. Bellmer.

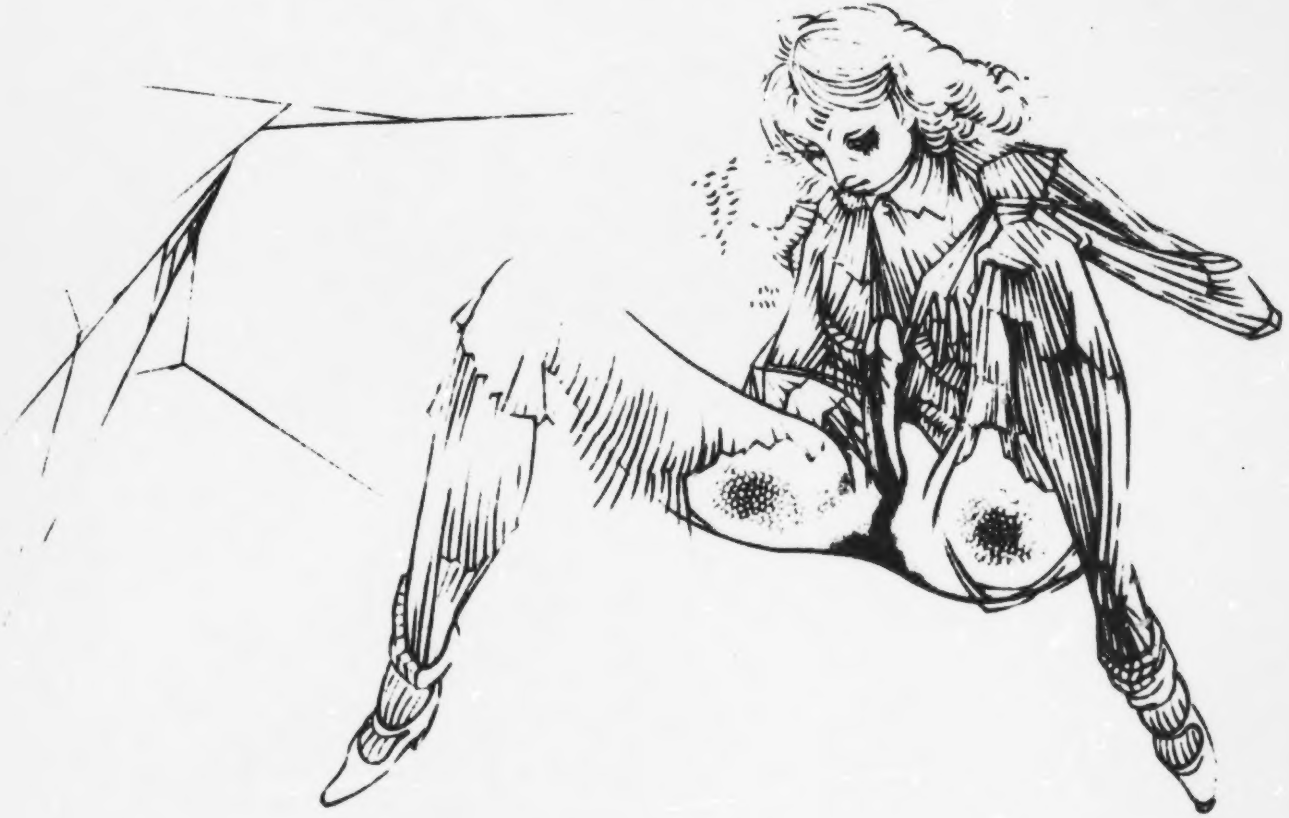


Fig. 76. Bellmer.

Fig. 77. Magritte.

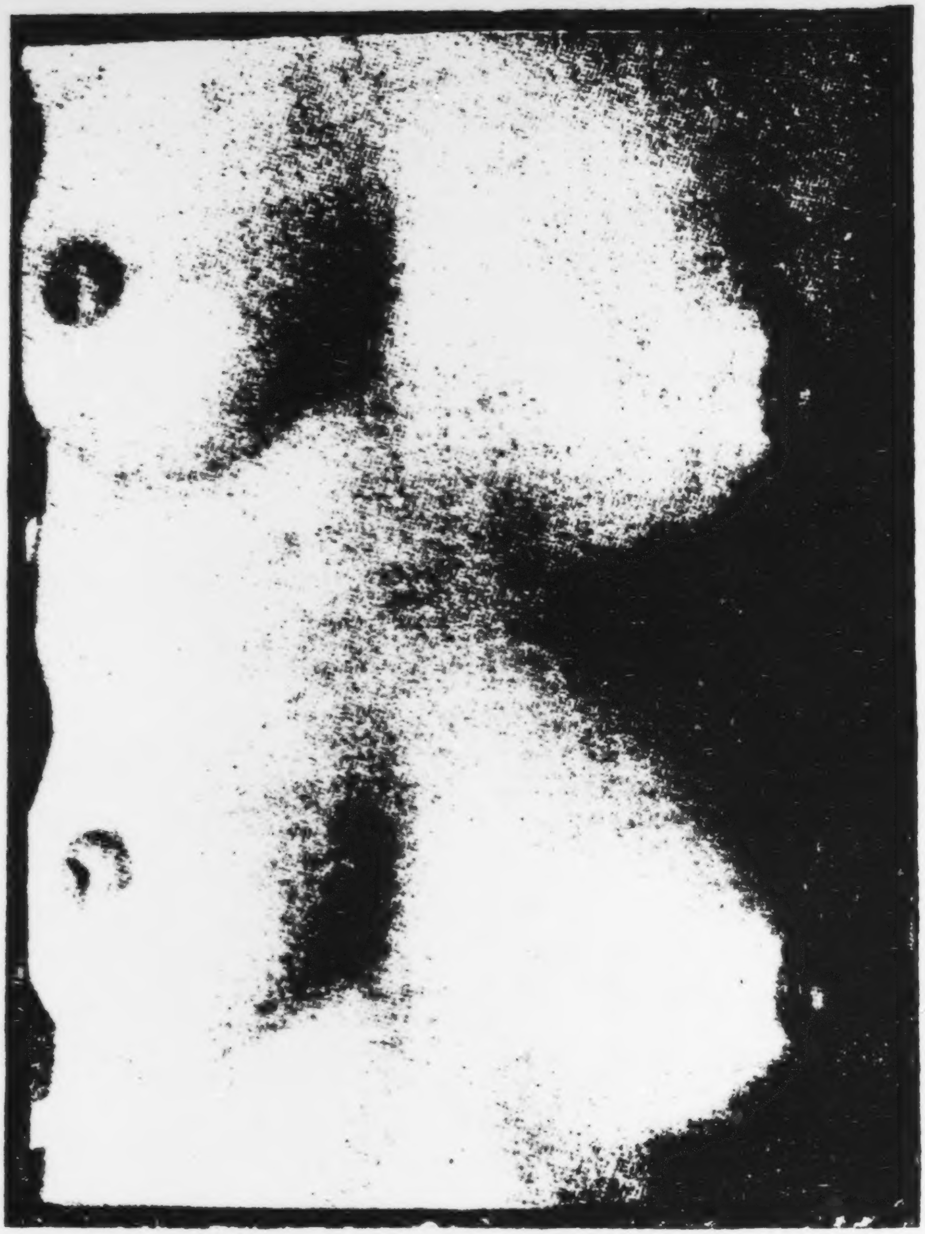


Fig. 78. Ray.

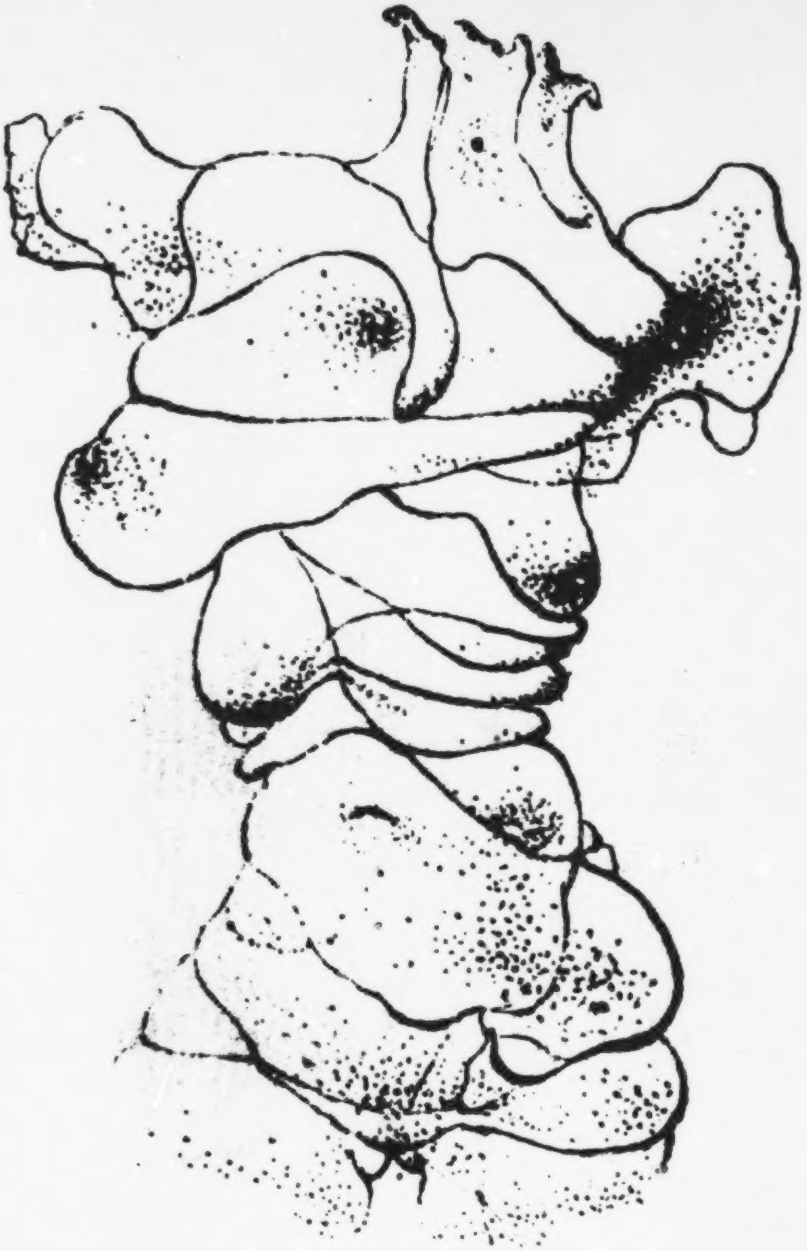


Fig. 79. Bellmer.

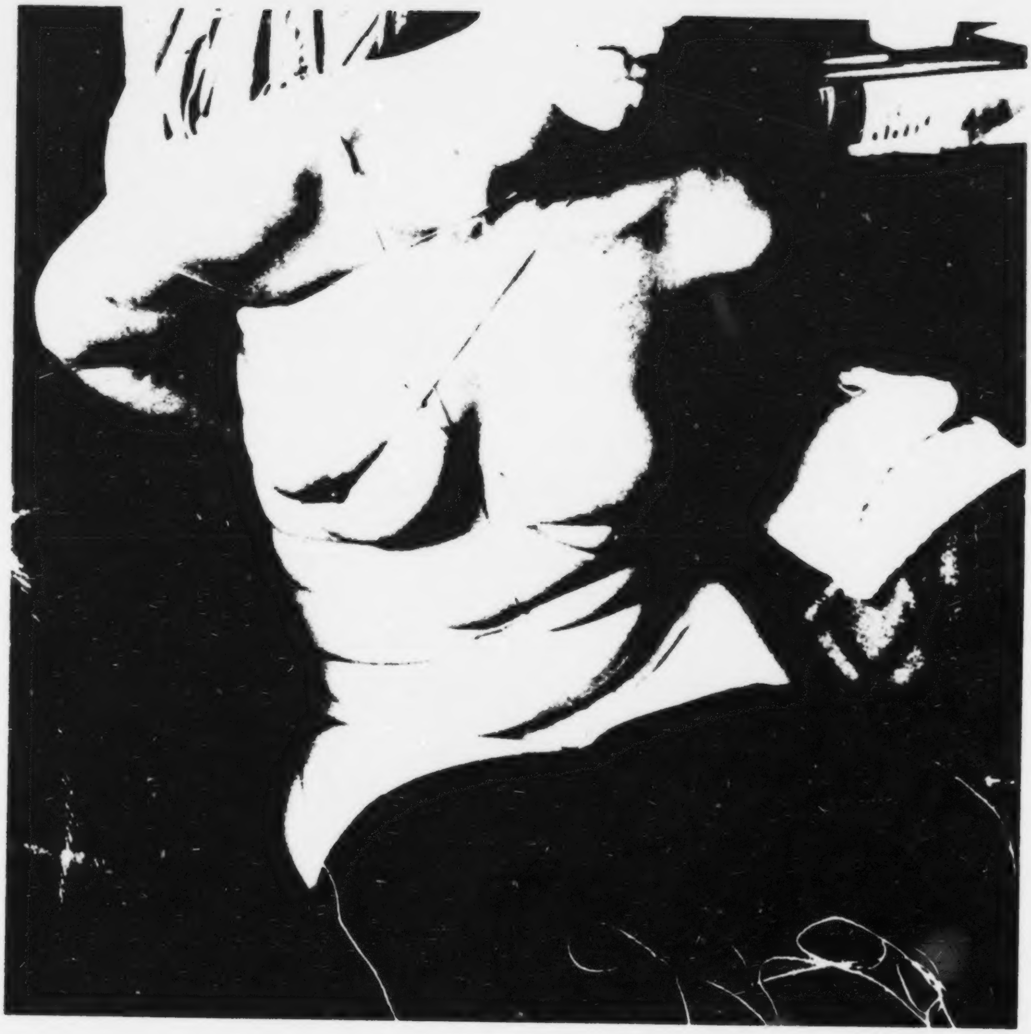


Fig. 80. Bellmer.

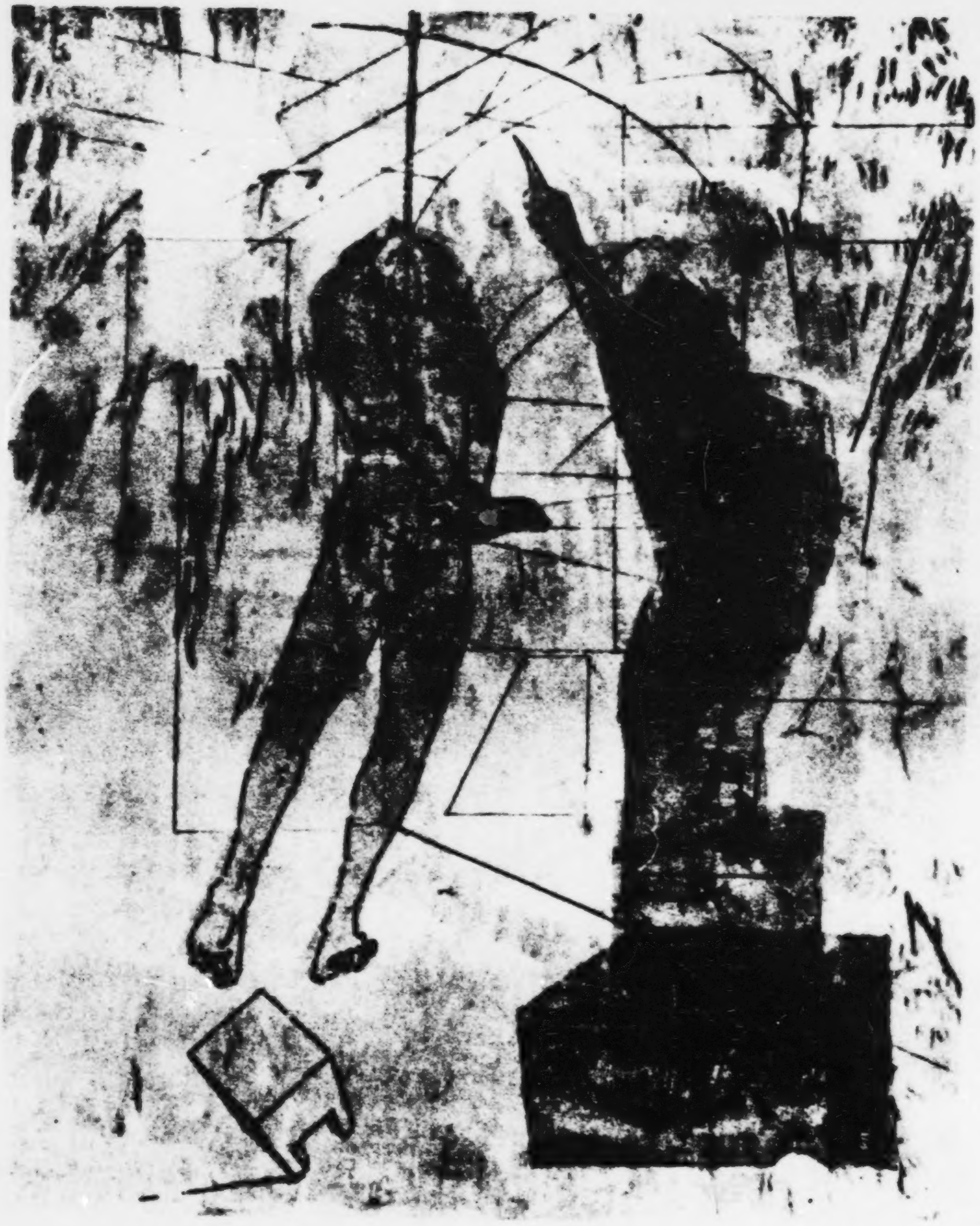


Fig. 81. Masson.

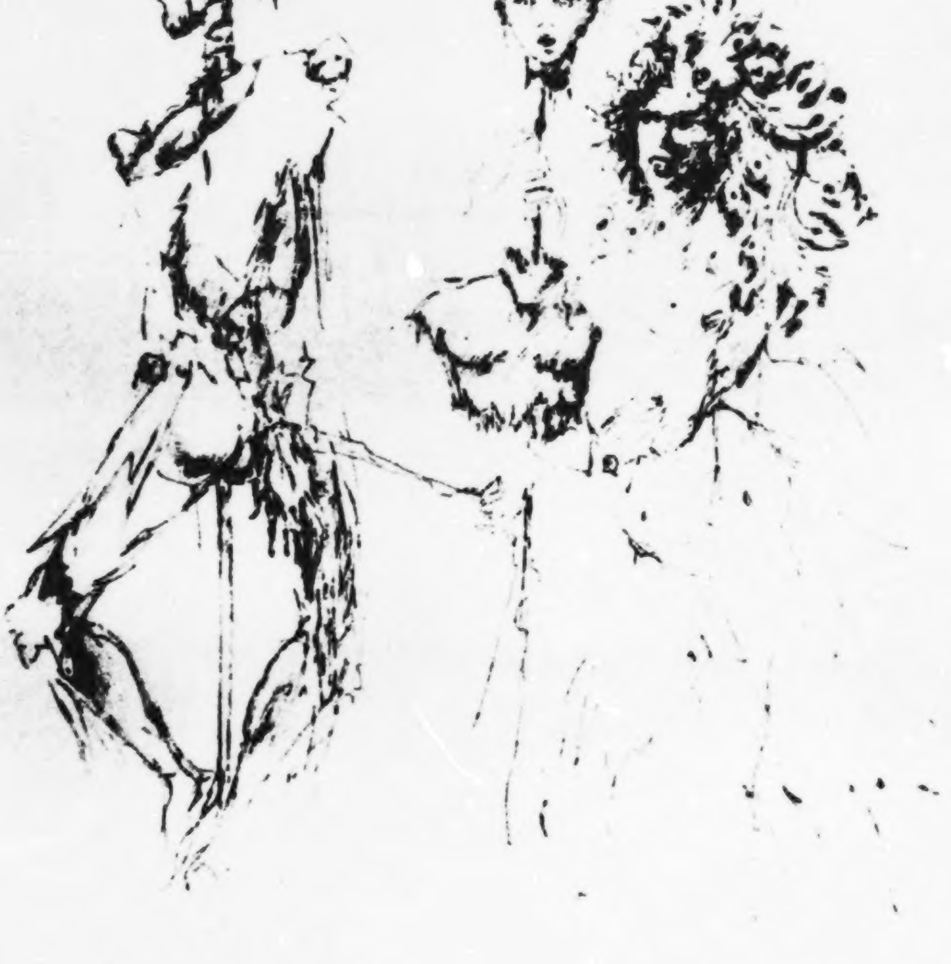


Fig. 82. Fini.

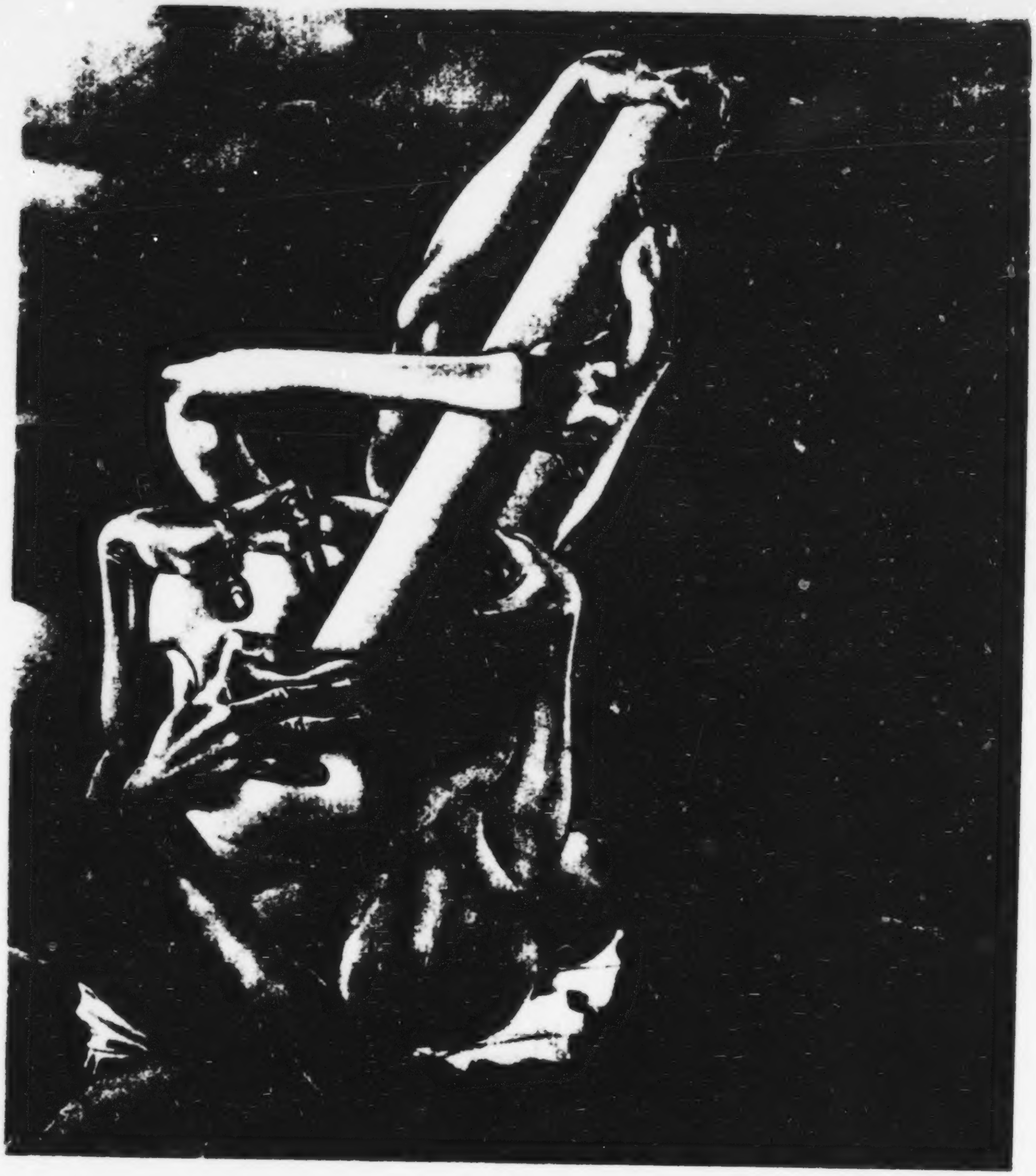


Fig. 83. Bellmer.

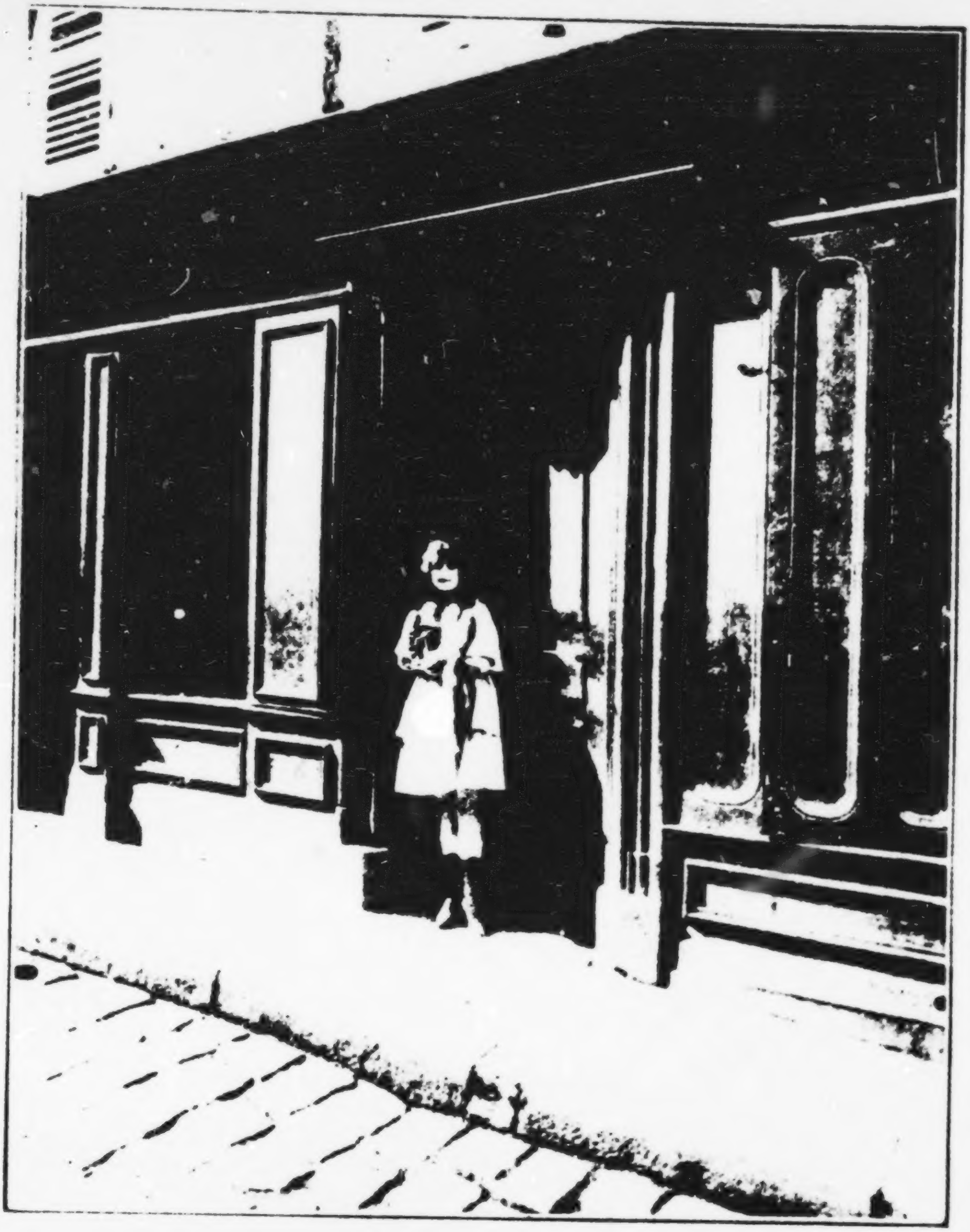
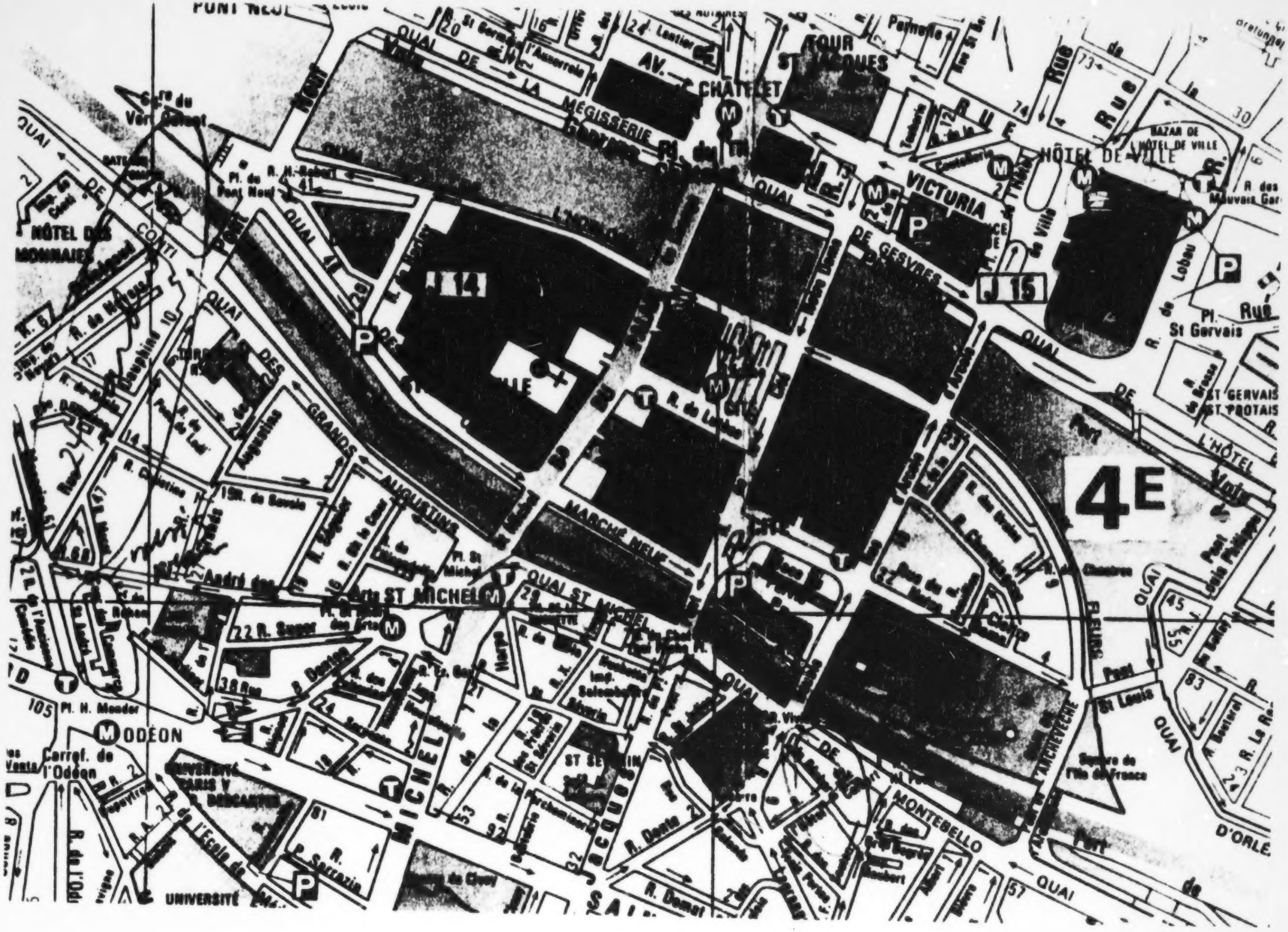


Fig. 84. Anonymous.


PONT NEUF
QUAI DE LA MÉGISSERIE
AV. VICTORIA
CHATELET
TOUR ST JACQUES
RUE
HÔTEL DE VILLE
BAZAR DE L'HÔTEL DE VILLE
R. des Mauvais Garçons
R. de Lobau
Pl. St Gervais
ST GERVAIS ST PROTAIS
QUAI DE GESVRES
J 15
J 14
QUAI DE L'HÔTEL DE VILLE
4E
FLEURS
QUAI
Pont St Louis
QUAI D'ORLÉ
Pont Louis Philippe
MARCHÉ NEUF
QUAI ST MICHEL
ST MICHEL
GRANDS AUGUSTINS
QUAI DES
CONTI
HÔTEL DES MONNAIES
Vert Galant
R. Christine
R. Séguier
André des Arts
R. Suger
ODÉON
Pl. H. Mondor
Carref. de l'Odéon
UNIVERSITÉ PARIS V
UNIVERSITÉ
R. de l'École de
R. Sarrazin
ST SEVERIN
R. Dante
R. Domat
MONTEBELLO
QUAI
ARCHEVÊCHÉ
Square de l'Île de France
R. de Lutèce
R. de l'Odéon
105
57
83
45
M
P
T
Fig. 85. Map.

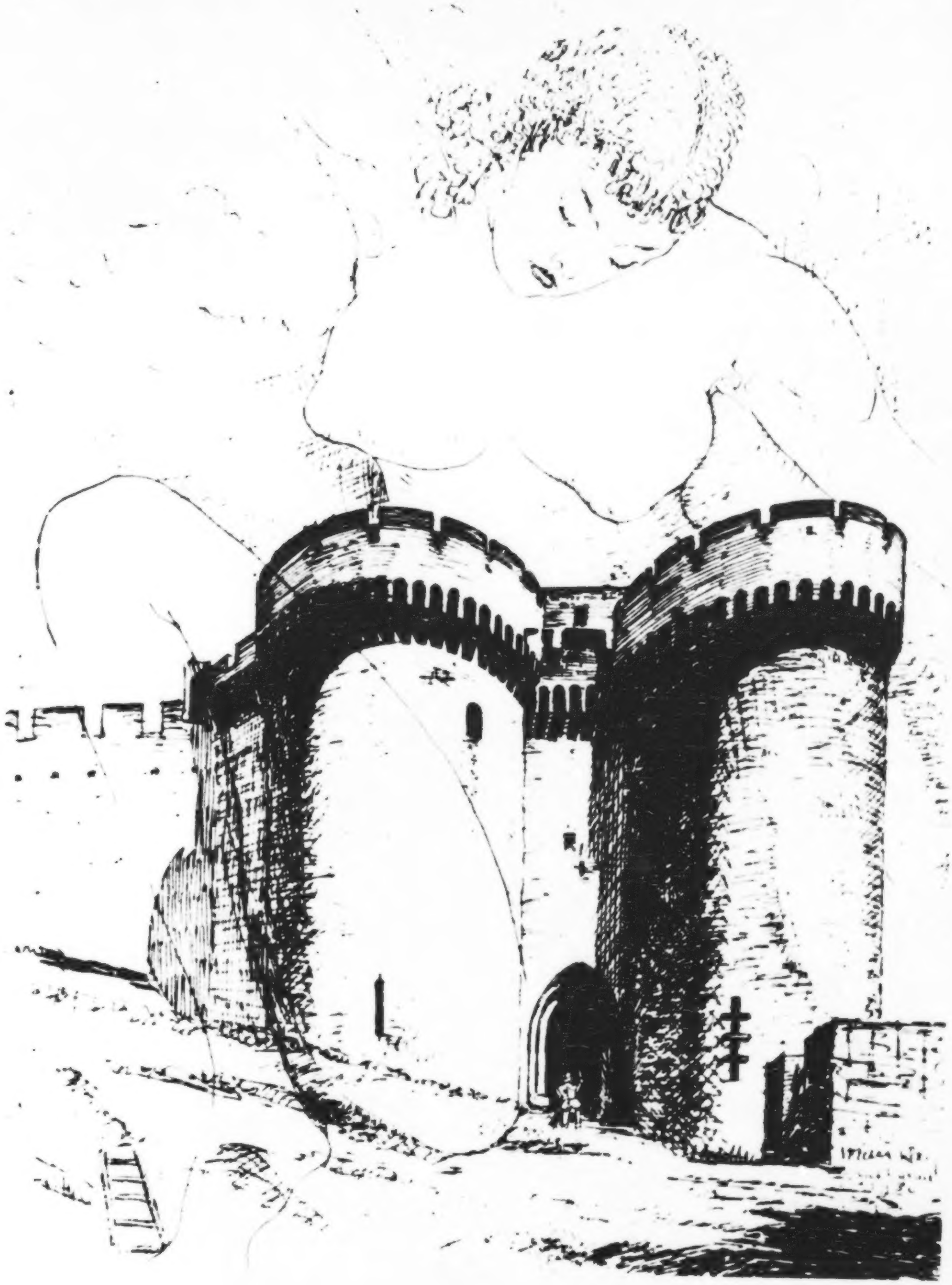


Fig. 86. Ray.

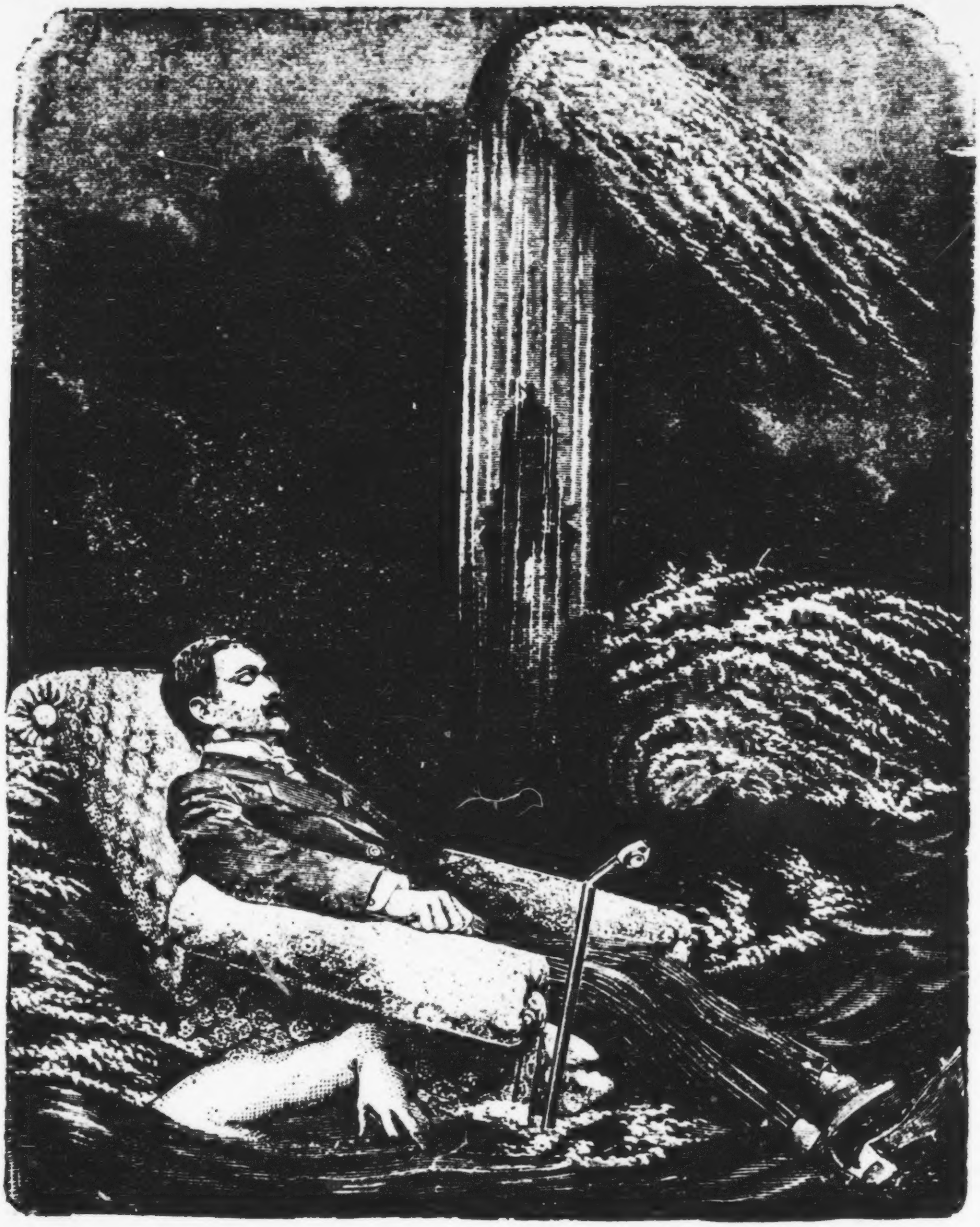


Fig. 87. Ernst.

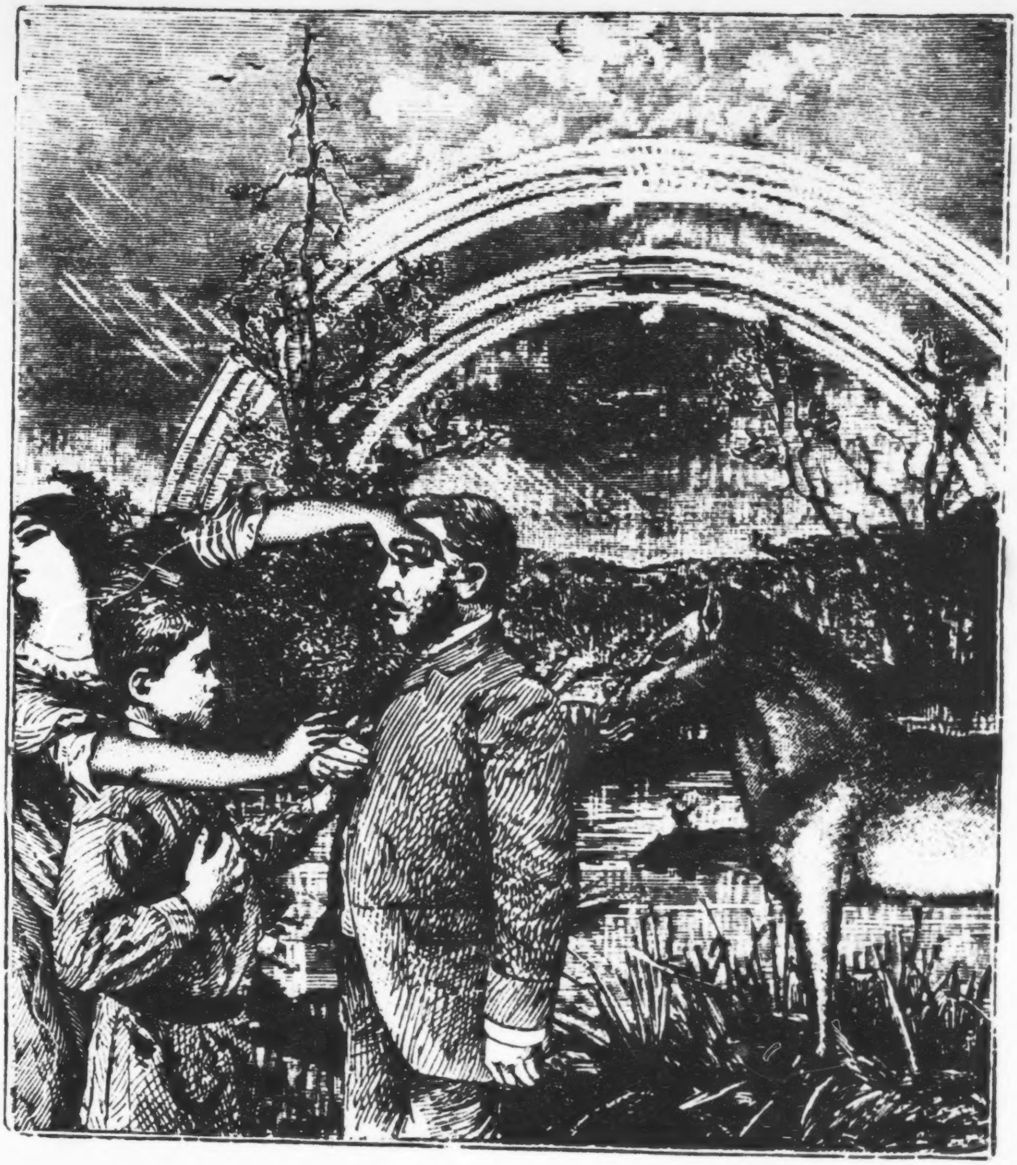


Fig. 88. Ernst

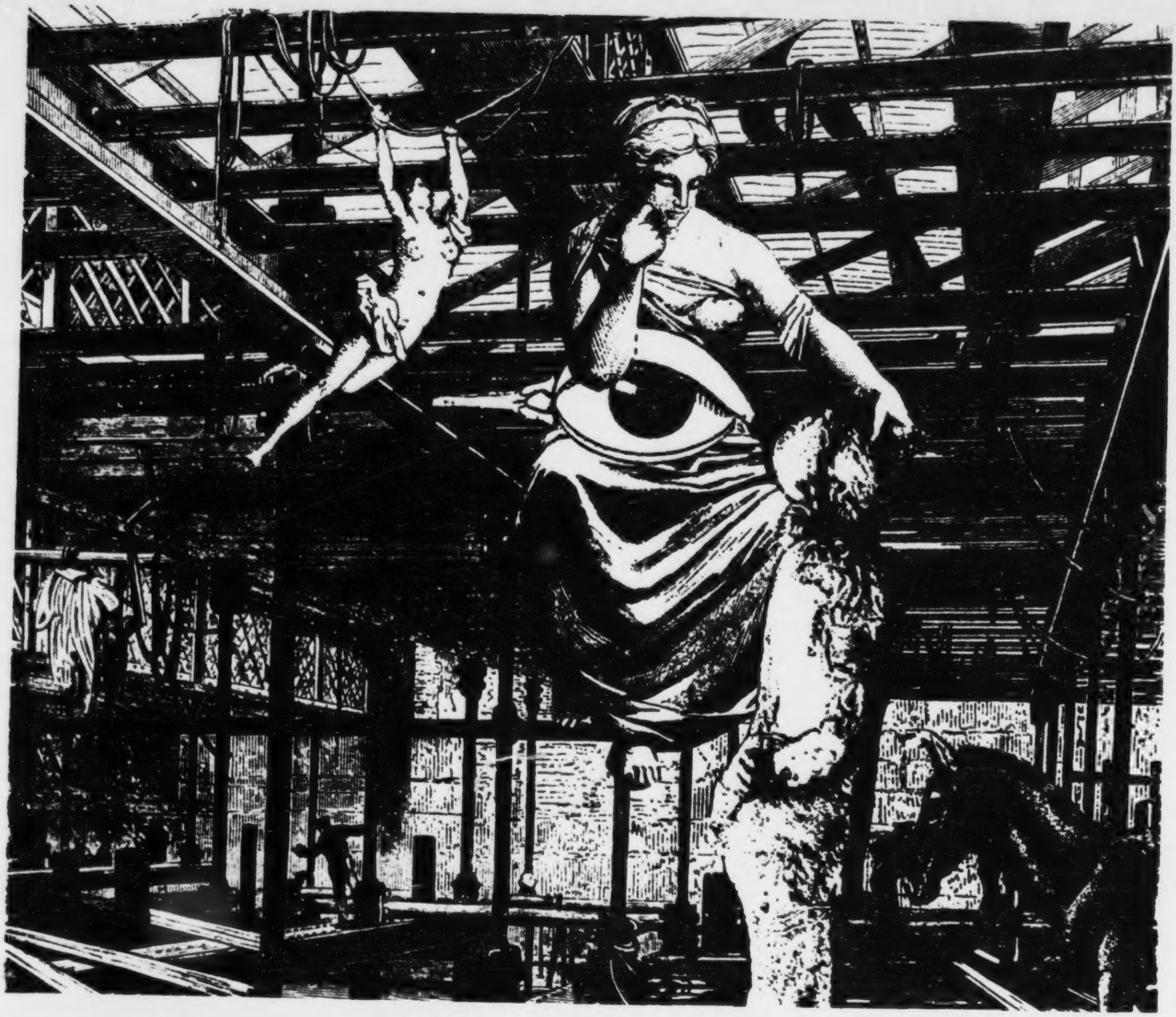


Fig. 89. Ernst.

Fig. 90. Ernst.

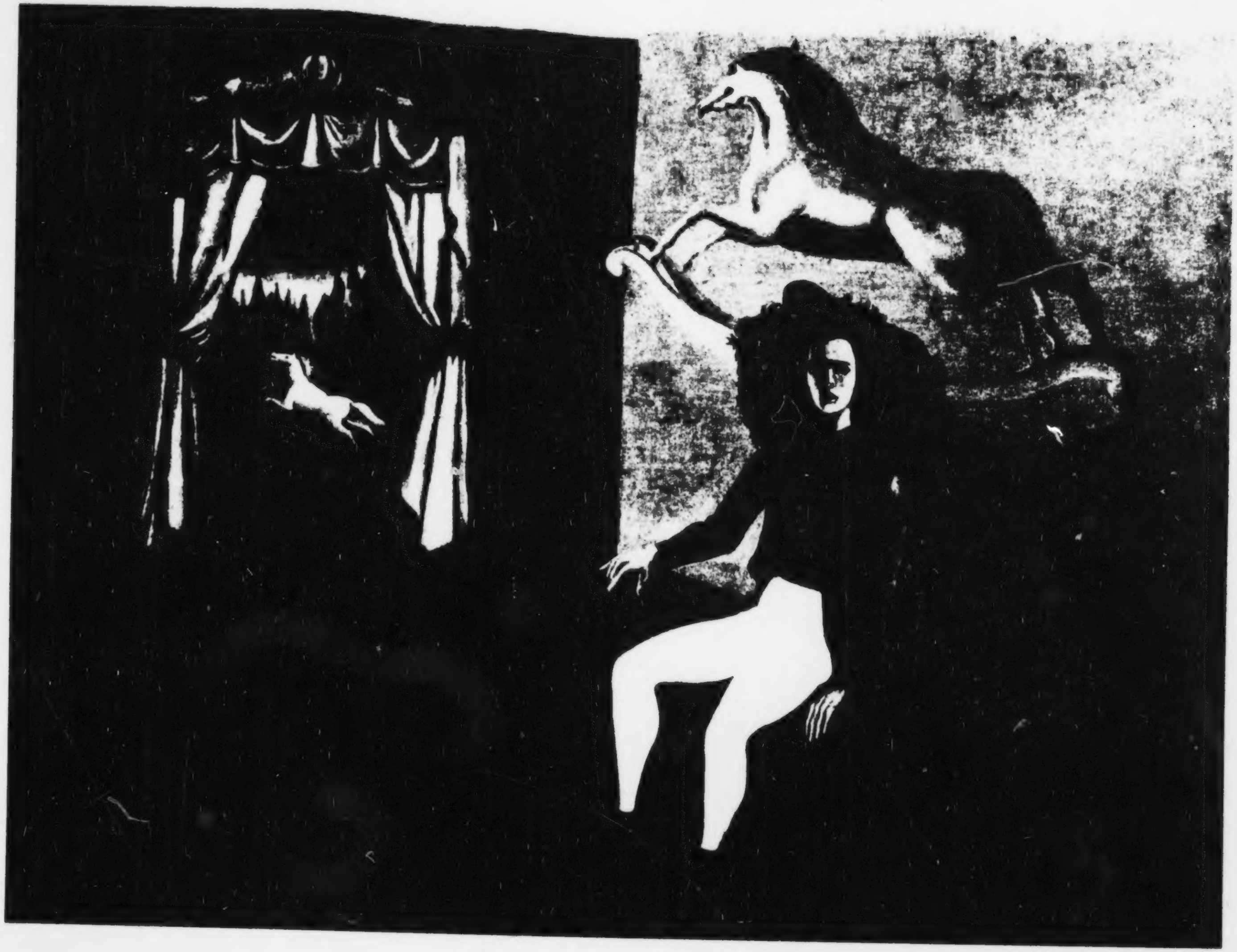


Fig. 91. Carrington.

Fig. 92. Hugo.